LITTLE THEATER CLASSICS

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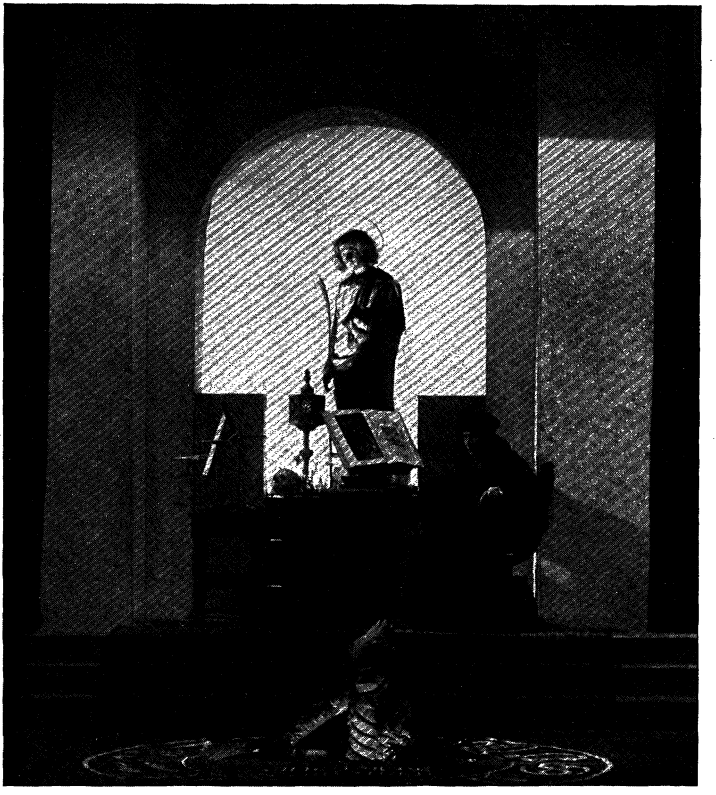
Volume One



SCENE FROM *DOCTOR FAUSTUS* AS PRODUCED BY SAM HUME IN HIS "PERMANENT SETTING" AT THE ARTS AND CRAFTS THEATRE, DETROIT, IN JANUARY, 1918

The appearance of the Good and Evil Angels

Frontispiece

LITTLE THEATER CLASSICS

VOLUME ONE

ADAPTED AND EDITED BY

SAMUEL A. ELIOT, JR.

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PREFACE

THE Little Theater Movement is a fact. It is, in the minds of many farsighted lovers of the theater, the most important fact in the theatrical situation in America to-day. It promises in the end to replace, in all our larger cities west of the Atlantic seaboard, the wasteful road-company method and the equally wasteful stock-company method of providing serious drama and theatric art to that part of our people which will not rest content with cheap shows or moving pictures. No doubt, plays that are extraordinarily well liked in New York will always later seek the West, and the stock managers will continue to present, in routine, inadequate fashion, at "popular" prices, the out-dated attractions of the commercial stage. But the primarily artistic theater, growing up in the community because the community needs, nourishes, and uses it, will more and more meet and satisfy the demand of drama-loving, art-loving theatergoers for new, experimental, and beautiful things.

But what drama are these artistic theaters to present, which will mark them at once as shrines apart from the movie house, the road theater, or the stock company? Here admittedly has lain their stumbling-block so far. In answer to their cry for original plays, the American dramatist, though stimulated by numberless prize offers, and splendid chances to try out new ideas in genuine "workshops", has not yet given to the Little Theaters anything great, scarcely anything

comparable with the best products of the business theater. The Washington Square Players have developed their own genre of saucy comedy, suited to New York but often disliked when presented at other Little Theaters; Stuart Walker has devised his original interludes, and brought forward the foreign genius of Lord Dunsany, in his Portmanteau Theater; the Wisconsin Players and the Provincetown Players have produced a great deal of experimental drama by little-known writers; — of course, there is advance upon, and distinction from, the mercantile farces and melodramas: else the Little Theater Movement could never have moved so quickly, widely, and far. The mere cold fact that it must, for safety,[1] give mainly one-act plays, and thereby *more* plays, is for many of our playwrights a stimulus to initiation and invention which the "legitimate" theater formerly stifled. But every Little Theater director utters still the timeworn plaint of the Broadway managers: Where are my plays?

It is to meet this want, learned through the editor's actual and varied experience, that this series of Little Theater Classics is now begun. Since new plays are so hard to get, and since plays of already tested character now demand substantial royalties less and less easily evaded as the art theaters emerge from privacy, the *classic* drama becomes a natural resource for an unfrightened director. Some will recoil: Shakespeare, Goldsmith, Sheridan, a dubious Browning, a drab

[1] Three or four widely varied playlets in a bill make an obviously broader and safer appeal to a varied audience than one long play could hope to make. Very often a single one-act play has saved a whole production from failure. A long play puts all the director's eggs in one uncertain basket.

and overacted Robertson — what other classics are there? Either be stale and dull, or attempt the ultra-difficult! Such seems to the average director the dilemma that confronts him when he imagines trying classics. But purposely to open wide the many-veined, glittering mine of the drama's past, the theater's long-tested and eternized wealth, this series is brought forth.

To the reader not less than to the producer of plays this series proffers its new-old treasure. Multiplying with grateful celerity, the readers of plays are yet almost restricted to the modern "literary" drama, — unaware of the pure theater-art richly but darkly preserved in the erudite tomes of philologic scholars. How few play students realize, for instance, that contemporary with Shakespeare's *Macbeth* there appeared Tourneur's *Revenger's Tragedy*, and surpassed *Macbeth*[1] in stage-quality: ephemeral, meretricious, but marvelously effective in action! Very recently, adequate translations have reintroduced the Greek drama to our poetry lovers, but the startling stage-worthiness of Greek drama is still depreciated and shunned. The immortal work of Lope de Vega, Calderón, Molière, Kleist, Hebbel, and many other Continental dramatists is almost unknown in English translations and quite unregarded as living theatric art. This series aims to revive, both for the artistic theater and for the genuine play-lover, these forgotten or unsuspected plays, this vital drama, the best material in existence for the student of the theater to ponder, for the art theater to produce.

[1] Else *Macbeth* would not have been so cut and adapted as it was.

For theater art it is — far more inherently theatric than the plays of some of to-day's dramatic idols! Written for a simpler playhouse, a barer stage, than ours, it had to grip the spectator's sense and fancy more compellingly, immediately, and greatly. It is puissantly imaginative, — for that reason, no doubt, it has endured, — and it glows not merely with poetry, with insight into character, with lofty thoughts and noble deeds, — the literary virtues, — but with vivid action, striking pictures, colorful contrasts, intense confrontations, exciting conflicts, and thrilling, deathless moments of sheer *drama*. It is itself only when it appeals to every sense, vibrating in a theater, enthralling a crowd. It admits of "style", moreover, — a boon to the producer and an added interest to the reader.[1] Uninjurable, adaptable to any kind of house or scene, asking only actors who understand and auditors who sympathize, it may be interpreted afresh by the individual insight of each producer, and "stylized" with any motifs preferred. Its temporal mannerisms and conventions may be abridged or sloughed, to reveal the clearer its immortal substance. The necessary compromises of its authors with the material and intellectual conditions surrounding its original production may be obliterated when out of harmony with modern taste, or accented when quaint

[1] Style is the aim and keynote of the new art of production. It seeks to divorce the theater from nature, to make of the stage no longer a "mirror" but a distinct realm of art, with its own independent rules and life. It is generally attained by simplification and elimination, presenting only the essence of the drama in hand and even this essence further unified by dominant "motifs" — in scene or light or manner of performance — till a work of pure theatric imagination, of creation, not representation, results.

and charming. The artist scene-designer, too, has in it freer scope for his vision, his "new stagecraft", than any recent, realistic play can furnish him. Though it seem expensive, being all "costume drama", it unexpectedly rewards the theater that attempts it with surprising openings for beauty, simplicity, and strange thrills inspiring first the players and through them the audience.

Some of these classic plays have but kernels, stray scenes, of everlasting fire. By cutting, rearrangement, shifts of emphasis, and appended business, — the producer's art, — these germs may be refashioned into gleaming one-act plays, letting into a bill of totally different, perhaps "sure-fire", playlets that flash of novelty, distinction, and imagination which most Little Theaters crave. Others, isolated monuments of genius, need but be freed of their out-rusted dross to fill a whole evening with inspired thunder and lightning. In no case should new matter be added, or the spirit of the author wrung awry: there is need of no rewriting, no revision even, such as Shakespeare has so often undergone. The reader will find uncontaminated the classic gold, and its setting of detailed stage direction and interpretation can only increase his enjoyment of the drama; and the producer, either professional or dilettante, will find complete and illuminating suggestions for the preparation of the play in its proper environment — the theater.

In this first volume five little plays are offered, in their chronologic order, as examples of the kind and variety of work to follow. Three of them have been actually produced, at the Little Theater at Indianapolis;

and a fourth, *Ricardo and Viola*, was rehearsed there long enough to make manifest its poignant theatric merit. The fifth, *Doctor Faustus*, was successfully, beautifully, and most effectively produced, though not precisely as it stands herein, by Sam Hume at the Arts and Crafts Theater, Detroit, in January, 1918. In its most abbreviated form, there presented, it played about an hour. *Ricardo and Viola* may take as long a time. The other three fit readily into a one-act bill, and no director need dread to try them singly, as he would justly dread, at first, to devote a whole production to such unsure experiments.

The plays have been rendered presentable even by amateur societies without a trained artist to produce them, if such societies understand simple stage terms — like the verb "to drop", meaning to move unnoticeably, while attention is fixed elsewhere, "up" or "down" (that is, away from or towards the audience), or "off" or "on" (that is, laterally away from or towards the center of the stage). Stage "right" and "left", of course, are contrary to the spectator's right and left. "Tormentors" and "wings" mean both the "flats", or painted cloth stretched on tall wooden frames, at the sides of the proscenium and stage, and also the openings before or between these flats. "Borders" likewise mean both the long "strips" of electric lamps suspended above the stage and the "masking" or concealing strips of cloth that hang before them. The "apron" is the part of the stage that is left in front of the lowered curtain. A "cyc(lorama)" is a semicircular "back-cloth" or "drop" of dyed or painted stuff, suggesting the sky and hiding the actual walls of the stage. Real literal

masks, recommended for use in *Doctor Faustus* (and made for the Detroit production with extraordinary success by Miss Katherine McEwen), are very new in our theaters; but the noted artist, Robert Edmond Jones, designed a number of them for *Caliban* at New York in 1916 and Boston in 1917 which proved extremely effective. They are molded out of *papier maché* to fit snugly over the whole head, padded within, and painted as desired.

The adapter, the editor, it should be remembered, is primarily a producer, schooled in the European theatric innovations and experienced in the American Little Theater. As a producer in the theater he has arranged these five plays, not for literary curiosity or academic pleasure, but for the test of artistic production which four of them have successfully survived. They are stage plays, — offered to our rising art theaters at merely nominal royalties, — and they have unsurpassed stage qualities to commend them, with splendid opportunities for our new artists of the theater gladly to seize upon.

SAMUEL A. ELIOT, JR.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

POLYXENA

Adapted from

the *Hecuba* of

EURIPIDES

Translation by the Adapter based on that of Arthur S. Way

As Produced in the John Herron Art Institute, Indianapolis, before the Little Theater Society of Indiana, October 30, 1915.

INTRODUCTION

ATTIC TRAGEDY, — as is now generally understood, — evolved gradually from a primitive dance expressing, narrating, and to some degree enacting the universal myth of agricultural peoples: the death of the corn, its scattering abroad, and its (or, as primitive folk conceived it, *his*) resurrection in the spring from the disseminated body's particles. It was both an imitative magical dance, meant to bring about or compel that resurrection, and also, or later, a religious ritual — worshiping the vegetation-spirit ("Dionysos") upon whom human life so intimately depended, by a solemn rehearsal of his agony and triumph. Besides dancing the story with greater and greater elaboration, and expressing physically, as at first too deep and intense for utterance in primitive speech, the emotions which that story evoked, the worshipers also sang, whether traditionally or spontaneously we know not, but of course rhythmically, as they danced — narrating, lamenting, and furiously rejoicing. By and by the general mass of dancers and singers was divided, and the fractional groups given separate parts of the rite to express or to perform, opposite each other, in strophe and antistrophe; and there was even some certain amount of individual utterance. Then words were written down and learned; some poet composed music and words and movements — all together — and taught them to the more and more

specialized chorus for the annual festival. The particular chorus that gave rise to tragedy in Attica impersonated nature-spirits, clad in the skins of goats, *tragoi*, whence their song was called *tragoidia* — "goat-ode!" It was now not a great innovation for the poet to array himself as Dionysos in person and deliver solos to which the chorus responded, nor thereafter for him to assume other rôles connected with the Dionysos story, or to impersonate epic heroes of similar tragic experiences: Pentheus, Hippolytos, Orestes, etc., especially local heroes in whose memory some festival was annually held at which their story could be thus dramatically retold by poet and chorus. Tragedy thus came to re-enact its own legendary origins, in an atmosphere of immemorial awe, — as a religious rite at once mysterious and vivid, a celebration in which the capable citizen could take part, an outdoor drama whereat the community could "assist" in unlimited numbers. By this growing diversity in story, too, the original chorus of satyrs came to be put off until the close of the *fest*, taking with it its peculiar atmosphere of preternatural hilarity. Solemn performances of mythical heroic dramas preceded it, more and more unified in tone and artfully constructed for suspensive, mounting, emotional effects. As the poet varied his costumes and his rôles, so the chorus changed its dress three times, appearing (to cite a late example) with climactic effect first as old men of Mykênai, then as young slave-girls following Elektra, then as Erinyes, the very Furies out of Hell, and finally as traditional satyrs, in Aeschylos' tetralogy *Agamemnon*, *Choephoroi*, *Eumenides*, and *Proteus*. With the growth of comedy, from somewhat different

sources, and its admittance at Athens to the same great Spring Festival of Dionysos as tragedy marked, the individual tragedies ceased to be parts of a larger whole, and the satyr-play, particularly, became less and less boisterous, and finally appears to us, in such works as Euripides' *Alkestis*, as tragedy with a happy ending and a discordant note or character of jollity and license: — a kind of drama the present age may appreciate better than any other, at least since the Elizabethan, for contrast in the theater is now better liked than smoothness. The Greeks in their true tragedies, however, were absolutely harmonious: limpid, naïve, religious, and oftentimes cumulatively and unrelievedly terrific.

Euripides, who was set down by Aristotle as the "most tragic of poets" and was acclaimed by the aged Goethe as the greatest dramatist of every age and clime, adhered strictly and with evident pleasure to this traditional form. While filling it with a wonderful originality of thought, insight into human character (especially female character, studied realistically within the unalterable shell of the myth's action and events), and supreme lyrical beauty, he kept it rigid, with long set speeches, solos and choral songs, metrical regularity, and rhetorical rather than physically dramatic conflict. He was a poet, a philosopher, a moralist, a mystic, but withal a mightily successful playwright. His tragedies were revived with success and produced in distant lands for six hundred years after his death, — twice as long as Shakespeare's have yet lived, — until their songs had become unintelligible because men had forgotten the old Attic pronunciations (as we ourselves are yearly slipping farther from

Shakespeare's true pronunciation); and there is a thrilling story of a "tragedy fever", as Gilbert Murray calls it, "that fell upon the people of Abdêra in Thrace through his romantic play *Andromeda* five hundred years after it had been written, so that in every street young men were walking as in dreams, murmuring to themselves the speech (since lost to us) beginning 'O Love, high monarch over gods and men. . . .'"

In his own time, however, Euripides was a cause of ceaseless contention: the conservatives in his native city feared and hated him, and awarded him few prizes; but elsewhere in all Greek lands he was adored. The Syracusans, after capturing seven thousand Athenian invaders of their far-off Sicily, let those of them go free who could teach choruses or speeches of Euripides; and the king of semibarbarous Macedon welcomed and made much of the aged poet when some particularly spiteful attack upon him at home caused him to leave Athens, a voluntary exile. He was the ne'er-abandoned butt of all the comic writers: Aristophanes, their chief, seems to have been absolutely fascinated by him and to have known nearly all his plays by heart.

His plays are said to have numbered ninety-two, of an average length of perhaps fourteen hundred lines, and nineteen of them have come down to us intact or nearly so. He was first "granted a chorus" for a day of four plays in B.C. 455, when he was, probably, twenty-nine years old. He did not win a prize until 442. His early work is almost unpreserved; the *Cyclops*, a true satyr-play, and the uncertain *Rhesos* are all we have until the *Alkestis* mentioned above, which was produced in 438. The real succes-

sion of the extant plays begins with the savage, intensely, modernly dramatic *Medea*, in 431 — the first year of the Peloponnesian War, in which Euripides, though far too old for soldiering according to our standards, without doubt fought through several seasons. Plays have come down to us from the early years of this war of comparatively little intrinsic merit, but striking for their glorification of Athens and democracy, or their revilement of Sparta: plays like the *Andromache*, *The Children of Heracles*, *The Suppliant Women*, and even the *Heracles Mad.* The beautiful and again modernly practical *Hippolytos* of 428 is based on an Attic myth. So is the *Ion* of ten years or more afterwards — the first play we possess of the new, bitter, "rationalistic" Euripides, who later writes the *Elektra* and the *Orestes.* These three plays would be most intense and effective on the modern stage. In 415 comes the "occasional" tragedy based on the utter destruction by the Athenians of the helpless little island state of Melos, showing the awful suffering on the "other side" of conquest and revived of late with great effect by haters of war: *The Trojan Women.* It is the most tragic of all Euripides' works. There is, besides, one prolix and heavy epic play, *The Phoenissai;* one long and stilted romance, the *Helenê;* one wild, beautiful romance, the *Iphigenia in Taurida;* one unfinished but most interesting play about Iphigenia at Aulis, — the modernest and freest of Greek tragedies; and lastly, harking back to the original Dionysos story and the early, choral, regular form, the mystic, musical, greatest play of all: *The Bacchai.* It is remarkable that most of these plays were written by a truly old man — but they are

wonderfully fresh, keen, passionate, and beautiful as very few dramas in history have been.

The particular play from which our *Polyxena* is adapted, the *Hecuba*, as it is called after the Latinized form of its heroine's name, Hekabê, was written about B.C. 426 or 425, before Euripides was mustered out of his city's army at the age of sixty, but not before he had begun to suspect the ochlocracy of his fellow-countrymen, the specious success of their demagogues' oratory, and the extravagance of their imperial dreams which by arrogance, "*hybris*", later brought upon Athens her pitiful fall. There are bitter references in it to the two sons of Theseus, true scions of Attica, who spoke against each other, but were alike in favor of that ghastly sacrifice which enlightened Athenians would have antagonized with Euripides' own revolted pathos. The dramatic passion of the speeches is interrupted several times to admit sententious moral maxims which no doubt had immediate and manifest application to their first hearers. The technical construction of the play as a whole is extraordinarily faulty: it splits in the middle, permitting us to present the first half, with a few passages brought forward from the second half to allow a more realistic length of time for Polyxena's slaying, as a separate play; and it ends without any of that steady rush to a climax and swift-falling, harmonious conclusion, letting the hearer slip into his own world from a dream-glamor of tragic memory, which marks the poet's best dramas.

The story of the second half, in brief, is that after what we have made Hekabê's last speech a handmaid comes from the shore bringing Polydôros' corpse. It is lamented until Agamemnon himself comes to hurry

Hekabê to her daughter's burial. She appeals to him to aid her in her revenge upon the wicked barbarian king, Priam's erstwhile friend, who has slain her son. Agamemnon is afraid of his unruly army, which would naturally side against Hekabê, but agrees not to interfere. So she sends for the Thracian, and with an appeal to the avarice which she knows first induced him to her son's murder she lures him, together with his two little boys, into her hut, and with the other women's help there kills them and blinds the king. He, raving barbarously, pursues her forth: and here, in physical torment, as so often with the Greeks, is the theatrical climax of the play's horror and true drama. But then Agamemnon returns and questions; and the frenzied wretch, in defiance of nature, delivers, himself, the formal "messenger speech" about his own mutilation, and implores "justice." But Agamemnon judicially listens to Hekabê; and the eyeless king, condemned, falls back on prophesying terrible things about them both till Agamemnon has him dragged away, and herds the women off with the concluding words of our own short version.

How much clearer, and better, is the first part, here adapted! We have, here, most of the elements of the Euripidean tragedy. A divine epiphany is the only striking omission. There is first the set prologue, giving us expository facts and even more importantly casting over us the veils of awe and remoteness and mystery — the all-essential atmosphere. The Greek performance probably began with a prayer or ritual, enjoining silence in all the vast audience; and upon that reverential hush the Ghost arose and wailed his fate and prophesied his sister's. The foreboding here

is the groundwork of the tragic emotion. It is repeated, more lyrically, more tensely by the aged Queen; then the Chorus enters with the tidings of its truth. From Polyxena's later line, "Farewell, Mother, and Kasandra, farewell," as though Kasandra were present, the adapter seized the idea of making Kasandra, the seeress, the clairvoyant, the Chorus-leader who in such a passage does most of the singing for it, and "pointing" thus the various references to her profanation by Agamemnon; but in the original the Chorus is always quite anonymous. Steadily mounting, the tragic emotion now breaks forth in Hekabê's lamentation, her feeble-fierce turn upon the messengers of ill, her piteous call to Polyxena, and trembling disclosure to her of her fate: and then Polyxena bursts into a lovely lyric, of grief for the mother but resignation for herself, calming and harmonizing, without letting drop, the heart-wringing pathos of this introduction. Then begins the drama proper, — the struggle between Odysseus, the subtle, inexorable Greek, and Hekabê for the young girl's life, ended with sweet nobility by Polyxena herself. As she is led, muffled, away, Hekabê screams, moans, and swoons: the pity and terror are at breaking point; and then the Chorus intervenes with Euripides' inimitable poetry to smooth the ugliness of suffering into pure sympathetic loveliness. The song ends with all the women sinking down, prostrate: then comes the passage inserted from later in the original play — wherein Kasandra is made to see the murder clairvoyantly (as in *The Trojan Women* she foresees her own), the Queen to cry out in utterest agony, but musically, and the Chorus to take up their passionate

song, then turning it, even more remotely and assuagingly than at first, to sweetest lyricism: until the Messenger enters. The Messenger speech is artfully led up to, beautiful in itself, and naturally lowers by degrees the pitch of feeling. Hekabê reacts with tragic resignation, and the play ends — a Greek tragedy in little.

Now what was the original manner of producing this immortal type of drama? In our sketch, above, of its evolution, we left the poet acting various parts and the chorus impersonally responding, expressing and augmenting the proper emotion. The chorus is fundamental. By its receptivity and its numbers, multiplying by mob-psychology the sweep and contagion of feeling, it was, it is, an ideal dramatic instrument for the producer who can use it. Music, too, had a tremendous emotional effect upon the Greeks, — as tremendous as the effect which Strauss's music to Hofmannsthal's *Elektra* has upon us, making its hearing the most invasive theatrical experience in the world, — and the chorus' varied singing kept the audience's hearts wide open and acute. For long, no doubt, the whole tragedy continued to be sung, with even more stately unreality than oratorio or opera still has for us. In Aeschylos' *Choephoroi* is a gorgeous lyrical duet: Orestes and Elektra apostrophizing their unrighted father's ghost. But certainly this must have made the words harder to understand, and as the intellectual content of the plays grew to eclipse the mere religious emotionalism of their performance, the declamatory speeches must have come to be spoken, perhaps still with an underlining flute — a recitative effect — but with the utmost attention to

enunciation combined with great vocal power. It was lack of the latter quality which caused Sophocles to abandon acting the chief parts in his own play. Before his time a second actor already had been added, playing one after the other all the minor rôles; and Sophocles admitted a third actor. Were it not for this development, we could not have had Hekabê, Polyxena, and Odysseus all on the stage at once. Sophocles' forced abnegation seems to have been generally imitated by the tragic poets; but it is interesting to imagine Euripides, an old man nearly sixty, enacting his own old Hekabê!

The plays were produced, externally, as follows: The chief magistrate at Athens selected each winter three competing poets, each of whom submitted four plays — a full day's festival; he then chose three wealthy citizens to bear the expenses of producing each poet's work and share with him the glory of a first, second, or third prize, while honoring as well the god; and he picked out, probably with the advice of these two, the actors to be assigned to each. At first the protagonists — professional actors who themselves hired and managed the two lesser players of the company — played the chief rôles in each of a single poet's four plays, holding a private competition among themselves; later they each acted in one play by each poet. The poet was the coach or producer himself. The "stage" was merely a great circle of hard earth, seventy-five or eighty feet across, more than half surrounded by the deep-curving hillside where the audience thronged. Across the open segment of the circle was a plain wooden building, originally a tent, and called a tent, *skênê*, from which

special usage is derived our word *scene*, wherein players and chorus changed their costumes. It served in our particular play to represent the hut (called in the Ghost's prologue Agamemnon's tent) wherein Hekabê, his slave, was lodged. In front of this on either side were the entrance-ways used by both the audience and the chorus and actors. In the center was a large trap, connected with an underground passage from the rear, called Charon's ladder. This had many most effective uses: Prometheus was hurled down it into Tartaros, Heracles rose through it from his dangerous foray into Hades, Poseidon emerged from it at the opening of *The Trojan Women*, and in our play the Ghost may have entered by it — though he speaks of hovering over his mother's head, which would mean that he was on the roof of the *skênê*, another most effective spot to appear at, as is shown *inter alia* at the climaxes of the *Medea* and the *Orestes*.

There was an impressive austerity about the spectacle. The drama moved through slow, large scenes as in a greater world than ours. The performers were masked, to magnify their faces and voices, and it may be on that account that there is so little change or development in the characterizations. Hekabê is woeful, Polyxena gently noble, Odysseus cruel, consistently, without variation, because their faces were fixed, and mirrored but the one emotion. Yet the masks were by no means a sad necessity: they created by themselves alone an atmosphere of great and terrible, if remote, unhuman, actions and beings. They were a mysterious and awful, not a troublesome convention — and would prove equally potent now in Greek plays given out of doors before vast audiences. In Little

Theaters they would of course be affectations, as much as would the buskins or high-soled boots worn by the original actors to make them a little taller in the eyes of spectators looking down on and foreshortening them, or the padded swaddling robes donned to increase their size for the same cause. The majestic ritual dress originally part of the tragic convention had indeed been superseded, when truth required, before the date of the *Hecuba*. Euripides himself was the iconoclast, in his lost play *Telephos*, in 438. Telephos was a king disguised as a beggar — and lo! he was costumed as a beggar! There was indignation and a quarrel, but the realists won: and we may be doubly sure that Hekabê looked like a slave, not a queen, from the Ghost's concluding outburst of compassion at the sight of her.

The original tragedy *Hekabê* probably took at least ninety minutes in performance. Our *Polyxena* takes under forty. Not only have sententious parentheses, and even similes that seemed interpolated and unreal in English, been elided, but the translation itself has been made compact. It is confessedly based on that of Arthur S. Way in the Loeb Classical Library — and one chorus and frequent short passages in the dialogue are unalteredly his; but an effort has been made throughout to shorten up, to straighten out the inversions and archaic turns, to substitute modern for "poetic" words, and to abide more closely even than Mr. Way by the simple Greek. There is a conflict among translators on the latter point. Sir Gilbert Murray, whose brilliant versions (not yet including the *Hecuba*) have done more than anything else to popularize Euripides anew to-day, is a free poet, only

paraphrasing Euripides. He derives from Shelley and Swinburne, he loves the ornament and melody of their English, with the result, for a random instance, that a few poignant Greek words which might baldly be rendered:

> "Woe, woe, thou wringest, wringest my heart!
> Oh, sometime mighty lord of my city!"

become, in his *Trojan Women* (ll. 1216–18):

> "Deep in the heart of me
> I feel thine hand,
> Mother: and is it he
> Dead here, our prince to be,
> And lord of the land?"

And his use of rhyme for even the straight-ahead rhetorical speeches inevitably twists his English from the Greek. Greek words in themselves are so much more colorful, rich, melodious, emotional, than English words, that something of this additional grace is beyond doubt required for adequate translation to the ear. The parts of the original in irregular meter that were meant to be *sung* are rightly, inevitably, to be put into rhyme, and delivered to-day in a chant, without accompaniment, formed by exaggerating the natural inflections and slightly prolonging the vowels. Too musical a chant, in our short-voweled tongue, beclouds the sense — save perhaps in an acoustically perfect little auditorium. The dialogue, best rendered in not too monotonous or decasyllabic blank verse, should be spoken metrically, as in a Shakespearian play, — with much more individualization, variety, subtlety, and intimacy than was of course possible in the shouting spaces and through the awesome hollowing masks of twenty-three hundred years ago.

The stage directions, finally, which are wholly lacking in our Greek manuscripts, have hereinafter been made very full: but of course they are not binding on any producer who prefers a more stylized or musical method. The Euripidean form has so much style to start with, and the language and feeling is so inherently musical, that the adapter's effort, as producer, was always toward naturalness, reality, intimacy, leading him to bring his actors forward, keep his chorus behind them and static, and coach the action for humanly pathetic, rather than austerely tragic, values. Greek tragedy is suspected still, even by Little Theater audiences, and must disarm opposition by proving itself comprehensible, poignant, and personal before it will be accepted for its more peculiar artistic virtues.

CHARACTERS

THE GHOST OF POLYDÔROS, *Prince of Troy, youngest son of Hekabê and Priam.*

He should be completely swathed in indistinguishable dark stuff, leaving in the light only a whitened face and left hand, bony and corpselike; but he must have an emotionally rich voice, of young timbre, a power over pathos, and a magnetic, impressive personality, exerting upon the audience a spell of awe, illusion, atmosphere.

HEKABÊ, *once Queen of Troy, now captive and thrall to Agamemnon.*

She must be realistically *old:* an aged voice, but not too weak to scream with anguish nor too faltering to sustain long intense speeches of supplication; a frail body, slight and piteous; long hair not quite white but entirely gray, hanging disheveled; and garments of neutral gray tattered at the hem where a tarnished gold stencil remains — a long pale underdress and slightly darker scalloped and gilt-edged overtunic covering the upper arm (otherwise bare) and hanging, front and back, in low V's — with poor slave-sandals on her bare feet, and a fillet bearing traces of gilt about her brows. Both hands and face must be "made up" for age and fear.

POLYXENA, *Princess of Troy, her youngest child.*

She should have a virgin, almost adolescent, aspect, mingled with royal dignity: an appealing beauty,

a sweet lyrical voice, and a command of tragic emotion imparted through tone, face, and gesture alike. Girlish nobility is perhaps the first requisite. She may be clad in conventional Greek dress, of white or of pale blue or other tint as suits her best, with hair loose, arms and sandaled feet bare, and utter lack of ornament.

ODYSSEUS, *chief orator among the Achaians.*

A black-browed and square-, black-bearded but not too swarthy "villain" in full armor — helmet with horsehair crest, corselet over kilted tunic leaving arms bare, greaves, and sandals, — girt with a short sword, but without a shield, so that both hands are free, and draped over the shoulders with a large, capelike robe of heavy stuff, not cheesecloth, and of some strong color — preferably blue. His voice is strong and flexible, he knows how to threaten with his eyes — to *act*, in other words: he is the most theatrical of the characters, — and he makes a striking contrast of his victorious, secure, almost contemptuous masculinity among the cowed but hating captive women.

TALTHYBIOS, *the herald of the Achaians.*

He is an old man, but tall and erect. His long, thick, white hair streams from under his helmet, and his heavy white beard touches his breastplate — for he, too, is in full armor, only less battle-scarred, brighter, than Odysseus'. His kilt and cape are of a different, contrasting, but equally strong color, preferably red. He carries a long, ponderous spear as a staff, but does not lean noticeably upon it. His voice is deep bass, very musical, warm with

infectious emotion: he need not be an actor, but rather a singer, coached in the inflections of his speech as though it were a solo.

KASANDRA, *Princess of Troy and Priestess of Apollo.*

Once a virgin seeress, now made concubine to Agamemnon, she is mystic, big-eyed, rapt when not speaking, and apart. She wears a long regular underdress of some pale nondescript tint, with short, deep-crimson tunic over it. Her voice is a thrilling, musical contralto — always passionate. She must be intense, but not to the degree of taking attention from the other characters, who look at her with awe. She is technically merely the Chorus-leader.

THE CHORUS, *of captive Trojan women.*

Twelve or fourteen women and girls of widely varying ages and degrees, diversely costumed, but none strikingly, and all as ravished slaves: in rent, soiled gowns, with disheveled hair, and naked arms and feet, ornamentless. Four of them must have distinctly singing voices, and all should be able to swell the unisons.

TWO ATTENDANTS ON HEKABÊ.

Tall girls of equal height and resembling each other, with loose hair, in unobtrusive Greek dress. They join in the general choruses.

THE CAST OF THE PLAY AT ITS ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

THE GHOST OF POLYDÔROS	Samuel A. Eliot, Jr.
HEKABÊ	Caroline B. Hendricks
KASANDRA	Elinor M. Cox
POLYXENA	Elizabeth Bogert
ODYSSEUS	Johann Berthelsen
TALTHYBIOS	Edward LaShelle
THE CHORUS	Lilian Hamilton L. F. Rowe M. A. Humphreys Lulu Kanagy Mary Jane Walters Genevieve Downs Gladys Rose Beatrice Brown Jean Stewart Gladys Cline Mrs. C. H. Green
ATTENDANTS	Jeanette Orlopp Clementine Carroll

POLYXENA

THE SCENE: *The stage should be as nearly bare as possible: a mere dark-blue cyclorama with a self-closing slit, up center, for entrances and exits is the best "scene." On the program it may be set down as "An Open Place between the Sea and the Achaian Camp", and the time as "Earliest Dawn."*

The Lighting is important. When, after the extinguishment of the auditorium lights has sufficiently quieted the audience, the curtain first rises, the stage is in utter blackness save where a very small round spot-light, pale green, shines, preferably from the back of the auditorium, upon the Ghost's face and bare left hand flattened against his chest. In the extreme background, unseen, Hekabê stands waiting between her two attendants, — that the cyclorama may not quiver distractingly with their entrance through it in the midst of the atmosphere-inducing Prologue. At the Ghost's twenty-first line, where he extends his left arm and turns his face to profile, the spot-light enlarges to take in the three dim figures far upstage; and at the end of his speech it moves off him on to the slowly advancing Queen, while he fades back into the right tormentor. It covers Hekabê on a wide focus during her first speech, while the Attendants likewise withdraw to either side beyond its circle. Only at Kasandra's entrance do the regular stage lights begin to glow, bluish, increasing on slow dimmers, whiter and whiter. Footlights should be scarcely or not at all employed: the spot-

light will sufficiently "kill" the shadows of pure overhead lighting. By Odysseus' entrance the stage is quite bright, but coldly white. The maximum of this white light is reserved until Kasandra's vision of the sacrifice. With Talthybios' sudden entrance after the trumpet note, the ambers and even some reds are jumped in on top of this full white light, and are quite swiftly brightened as he comes down, so that for his big speech the illumination is rich, warm, and sunny. It should dim again after his speech, but not much, for the play's conclusion.

The house lights are dimmed out. A distant, prolonged single note on a clarinet sounds through the darkness. The curtain rises.

The Ghost of Polydôros is discovered, right center. He waits for absolute silence; then speaks, remotely, as one dead, with slowly growing intensity.

GHOST

I come from vaults of death, from gates of dark,
Where Hades dwells, aloof from other gods, —
Polydôros, born of Hekabê and Priam;
For when Troy perish'd, my sire's hearths were made
A desolation, and himself fell slain, —
Then slew me too my father's friend, and cast
Me, slaughter'd wretch, into the sea's salt surge.
Now on the beach I welter, surf-borne now
Drift on the racing waves' recoil and rush, —
Unwept, without a tomb; and in this land
Tarries my hapless mother, haled from Troy.
All the Achaians sit idle with their ships
On the beaches; for, appearing o'er his tomb,
Achilles halted all the Hellenic host
Even as they homeward aim'd the brine-dipt oar,

And claim'd, for *his*, Polyxena my sister, —
For sacrifice and honor to his grave;
Yea, and shall win, and not be giftless left
By his hero-friends, but Fate is leading on
Unto her death my sister on this day.
(*He half turns to his left, extending his hand, wide-spread, to indicate the dimly visible Hekabê, with the strong Greek exclamation,* Φεῦ![1])
O Mother, appall'd by this my ghostly phantom!
From Agamemnon's tent she sets her feet
Hither, who after royal halls now sees
The day of slavery! How thy depth of woe
Equals thine height of weal! A god bears down
The scale with olden bliss heap'd, ruining thee!

[*Keeping his hand fully extended, he backs away to the right and disappears.*

As soon as the light fell on her, Hekabê and her Attendants began slowly and tremulously to move downstage. They now take tiny steps on each accented word — thus dancing in a sense to the rhythm of Hekabê's speech. The five-stressed lines are uttered faintly, with quavering fear, in a high, aged, but musical voice. The Attendants each support with both hands one of Hekabê's arms, and she seems to lean heavily, shakily, on them.

HEKABÊ

Lead forth, O my children, the stricken in years from the tent.
Oh, lead her, upbearing the steps of your fellow thrall
Now, O ye daughters of Troy, but of old your Queen . . .
Clasp me, uphold me, help onward the eld-forspent,

[1] Pronounced Fĕ-o̅o̅, but as one syllable.

Laying hold of my wrinkled hand, lest for weakness I fall;
On you let me lean!
(*Here she stops, stands erect, and throws both arms above her head, crying imploringly*)
Zeus, O lightning-splendor,
(*and then, lowering her arms straight out to each side, and peering left and right, hauntedly*)
O mirk of the night,
(*the Attendants draw back and away a little*)
What visions in slumber haunt me
With terrors, with phantoms?
(*Extending both arms downward straight before her, in a deeper, stronger tone*)
O Earth, majestic might,
Mother of dreams that hover in dusk-wing'd flight, —
I cry to the vision of darkness "Avaunt thee!"
(*She advances a few little steps alone, the Attendants not moving. Then, with a new poignant note*)
O Gods of this soil, save my child, —
(*then to the audience*)
For a new stroke draweth near, —
A strain of wailing for them that wail!
(*Then higher, wilder*)
Ah, never have I thrilled with such fear,
My heart beat so wild!
Oh for Kasandra to arede me the bale
Of my dreams, or Helenos, god-taught seer!
(*She comes down more quickly, to the edge of the stage, and the Attendants withdraw to either side. Rapidly, torturedly*)
For I saw a dappled fawn which a wolf's red fangs were tearing,

Dragg'd from my knees whereto she had clung,
piteous, despairing, —
(*then, with her head high, less specifically to the audience*)
And *this* terror on my spirit is come:
The ghost of Achilles hath risen, and stood,
High on the crest of his earth-heap'd tomb,
Asking a guerdon of honor — the spilth of the blood
Of some one of the Trojan women crush'd groaning
under their doom!
From *my* child, spirits, I implore you, by motherhood,
Keep this — from the child of *my* womb.

[*Enter, through the cyclorama, rear, one by one but in haste, the Chorus, — Kasandra leading them, speeding down to Hekabê's left, speaking to her even before she turns to profile to hear, swiftly but very metrically.*

KASANDRA

Hekabê, to thee am I come, in haste,
Leaving the tents of our lords, abased
And allotted a hunted slave where I lay,
Hounded from Ilion's height, a prey
To Achaian hunters' spears!
(*Then with a deep note of compassion*)
Not for lightening of thy pain!
Sore-laden with heavy tidings of bane
The unwilling herald to thine ears;
For thy child to Achilles, say
The Achaians met in full array,
Must fall a sacrifice, fell-fated by their fears.
(*Then graphically, with a slowly lifting right arm*)
For mounting upon his tomb,

Full-arm'd, in a bright bloom,
Thou knowest, with helm and plume
His golden ghost did loom —
(*dramatically, with full, rounded voice*)
Slackening with spells the tauten'd shroud,
Withholding the sea-hungry sails, —
"Whither now, Danaans?" crying loud,
"Yet my due honor's offering fails,
"My glory without its victim pales!
"Leave ye my grave in gloom?"

WHOLE CHORUS (*which has arrived, and stands in a half-moon, but not too regularly, about and behind the two*)
Then a surge of great strife clasht!
The spearéd host of the Greeks was slasht
In twain,

ONE STRONG VOICE (*issuing from the unison*)
And whether the grave be given
Its victim, or not, was fiercely striven.

ANOTHER WOMAN (*standing beside Kasandra*)
Agamemnon, enamor'd of his Bacchic, ecstatic
(*referring plainly to Kasandra*)
Prophetess-paramour, pled strong in thy half,

ANOTHER (*next her*)
But the two sons of Theseus, true scions of Attica,
Orator-rivals, for a red epitaph
On the Peleid tomb clamor'd both with one will,
(*slowly, with much feeling*)
For a crown of blood flowing, flowing still!
(*Dramatically*)
"Shall the couch of Kasandra, a concubine's bed,
Ever come 'fore the sword of Achilles?" they said.

KASANDRA (*more calmly*)
Yet the vehemence of contending speech

Balanced, somehow, each 'gainst each, —
Till, honey-tongued and shifty-soul'd,
(*with the intensest loathing*)
The illusive truckler to the folk,
The scintillant son of Laertes, spoke,
Fashioning the army to *his* mold:
Not for a sacrificed slave-girl's sake
(*again her compassion-note*)
To thrust aside the bravest best
(*said as Odysseus supposedly said it*)
Of all the Danaans ungraced, —
Nor let some shade's scorn break
(*slowly, impressively, picturing*)
The silence round Persephonê,
Bitter sounding against the Greeks,
That now the plains of Troy forsake
And their dead, who died for Greeks,
Thankless, betray!

THE SECOND (*speaking rapidly*)
And Odysseus will come —

THE THIRD
Right soon!

THE FIRST
With the sun!

THE SECOND
Thy dear one from thy breasts to seize,

THE THIRD
To tear her from thy hand,

THE FIRST
Age-enfeebled, without worth!

THE SECOND
But go to the ships, to the altars run,

THE FIRST

Crouch clasping at Agamemnon's knees,

THE THIRD

Call loud on the gods in the heavens and on those under the earth!

ALL THREE

For either thy prayers will save thee from
The loss of thy ruin-stricken child,

KASANDRA (*doomfully*)

Or thou must look on a redden'd tomb
And a girl stretch'd out face down, defiled
With blood from her gold-deck'd throat down-streaming, —
Black-bubbling, — gleaming.

[*For a moment, Hekabê stands motionless. Then she turns to the audience, letting out her tremulous voice in lamentation.*

HEKABÊ

Woe for mine anguish! what outcry availeth
My agony-throes?
What wailing my fullness of torment outwaileth?
Old age! of bitter bondage! where strength and spirit faileth! —
Ah me, for my woes!

What champion is left me? What sons to defend me?
What city remains to me? Gone
Are my lord and my sons! Gone! Whither shall I wend me?
Whither flee? Is there god — is there fiend — shall befriend me?
(*moaning*)
Alone — alone!

(*She sharply turns to her left again, toward the Chorus, in senile rage*)
O evil-heralding daughters of Troy!
(*Finds herself confronting Kasandra; with lifting, quivering left arm*)
O thou evil-heralding one!
(*Then her rage breaks, her arm drops, and she turns back towards the audience, hopeless*)
Never more will my life know light or joy!
Foredone am I — lost, lost and undone!
(*She shrivels, — turns up-stage with bowed head, brokenly*)
Lead me, stricken feet and sore!
Take the old woman to yonder door!
(*She takes one faltering step, then stops, and calls up-stage in a high, agonized voice*)
Daughter! Child of a mother most ill-starr'd!
Hither! Hither! and hearken what I have heard!
Of thy dear life what desperate, desperate word!
[*The Chorus has divided before her, and down this lane runs Polyxena, after first calling from behind the cyclorama, shrilly.*

POLYXENA
Alas, mother, mother, what dost thou cry?
(*She enters*)
What news dost thou bring me? I fly
(*running lightly down to her*)
Like a bird frighten'd from the nest!

HEKABÊ (*embracing her, inarticulate*)
Ay, ay![1]

POLYXENA
What dost thou bode for me?
Evils foreshadow'd?

[1] A Greek cry of grief.

HEKABÊ (*clinging to her*)

Ay me, —
Alas for thy life, my own!

POLYXENA

Say out — keep it not from me long,
(*withdrawing from her clasp, slow, big-eyed with fear*)
For I dread, mother, I dread the wrong
That makes *thee* moan.
[*With a sympathetic return to her.*

HEKABÊ

My baby! Child of a mother stricken!
[*Fondling her with tense hands.*

POLYXENA

What would you tell me? My terrors quicken!
[*Standing free again.*

HEKABÊ (*like a bell-stroke*)

Death. For the Argive throng
Are of one mind, thy blood to shed
In sacrifice to Peleus' son.
[*Polyxena's face is horror-struck.*

POLYXENA

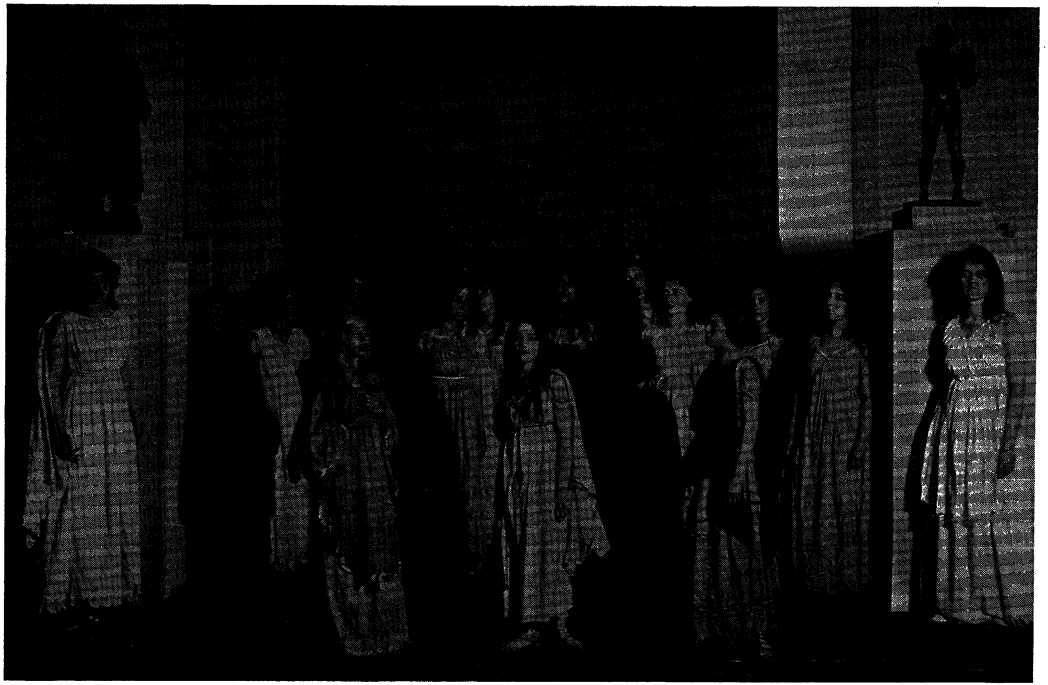
Ah me, my mother, how can thy tongue
Speak out the horror? — But be it said.
(*She masters herself*)
Mother, say on.

HEKABÊ (*spasmodically*)

Little one, I hear — the hideous wrong —
The Argive vote, — the doom forthsped, —
The hope of thy life — gone — gone!

POLYXENA (*listening, and looking at her, is overcome with pity, and breaks out, gestureless, with tear-filled eyes on her mother*)

O stricken with anguish beyond all other!



SCENE FROM *POLYXENA* AS PRODUCED AT THE JOHN HERRON ART INSTITUTE, INDIANAPOLIS, IN NOVEMBER, 1915

This picture shows Hekabê, Polyxena and Kasandra, backed by ten members of the chorus and flanked by Hekabê's two attendants

O fill'd with affliction of desolate days!
What tempest, what tempest of outrage whirl'd,
Loathly to look on, cruel-curl'd,
Hath a fiend up-roused and upon thee hurl'd, —
That never, never by wretched mother
A wretched child shall learn slave ways!

For me like a youngling mountain-pastured,
Like a lamb of a herd, thou shalt see men scar, —
Snatch'd from thine anguish'd clasp in anguish,
Shorn with the steel of the altar, to languish
In the darkness beneath us of Death, overmaster'd
Of misery, down where the dead things are!

For thee, mother, for the dark days round thee,
With uttermost agonized wailings I cry;
But for *my* life — for the ruin and wrack —
I do not wail, nor the forward black;
No; but a happier lot hath found me,
Forasmuch as to me it is given to die.

KASANDRA (*on her left, looking up-stage*)
And see, Odysseus comes with hurrying foot
To tell thee, Hekabê, the new decree.

[*Odysseus enters, rear, and comes steadily, haughtily, down through the flinching, 'skance-eyed Chorus. Polyxena draws out of his way, down left, and Hekabê backs toward the right as he faces her.*

ODYSSEUS
Lady, thou know'st, I trow, the host's resolve
And the vote cast, — yet will I tell it thee:
The Achaians will to slay thy daughter here
(*very suddenly grasping Polyxena's arm. She shudders. Neither looks at the other*),

Polyxena, on the steep Achillean grave.
Know'st thou thy part then? Not to be wrench'd away
By force, nor brave me to the brawl of hands;
But know thy strength, thine imminence of ills;
(*shrewdly but not cruelly*)
'Tis wise, even amid ills, to keep good sense.

HEKABÊ (*half to the audience, summoning up her strength*)
Ah, woe! It seems, a great struggle is at hand, —
Burden'd with groanings and fulfill'd of tears!
I died not, where so well I might have died;
And Zeus destroy'd me not, — but keeps me alive,
Miserable, to see ills — more than ills o'erpast!
(*Then to Odysseus timidly*)
Yet, if the bond may question of the free
Things that *should* vex them not, nor gall the heart, —
Then let me ask, and hearken thy reply, —
[*She stops, not finishing, for fear.*

ODYSSEUS
So be it. Ask. I grudge not the delay.
[*He lets Polyxena go. She glances at him, — then seeks Kasandra's protection.*

HEKABÊ (*timid, plainly leading up to something*)
Rememberest thou thy coming unto Troy
A spy, in rags vile-vestured, and the blood
Stream'd from thine eyes and stiffen'd on thy cheeks?

ODYSSEUS (*deeply, genuinely*)
I do, for deep it sank into my heart.

HEKABÊ
And Helen knew thee, and told none save me?

ODYSSEUS
I mind me. I was fallen into great peril.
[*He stands rapt, remembering.*

HEKABÊ

And to my knees didst cling, — being *lowly*, then?

ODYSSEUS (*swiftly, tensely, living it over again*)

With grasp of death upon thy robes my hand —
[*She interrupts eagerly.*

HEKABÊ

Ay, and what *saidst* thou? — then *my* slave?
[*With majesty and gleaming eyes.*

ODYSSEUS (*recalled to himself, smiling cynically*)

Words — words full many I found, to escape from death!

HEKABÊ (*insistently, approaching him*)

I saved thee — *saved* thee? — and sent thee from this land?

ODYSSEUS (*assenting, matter-of-factly*)

So that I now still look on the sun's light.

HEKABÊ (*close to him now, bursts out, screaming "coward" up into his face. He stands his ground, almost smiling at her trembling rage*)

Then art thou not a coward for these plots, —
Thou who receiv'dst from me all that thou sayest,
Yet doest us nothing good, but the utmost ill thou canst?
What crafty wile induced you to this doom
On my poor child? Was it *duty* led them on
To kill a *girl* on a grave that *kine* should grace?
Or doth Achilles, eager to slay in turn
His slayers, rightfully aim death's shaft at *her?*
She never did him any harm! 'Tis *Helen*
He *should* demand, — fit victim to his tomb, —
For she destroy'd him, drawing him to Troy;
And if for the death one captive must be pick'd
By overpowering beauty, *her* Tyndarid face

Is foremost fairest, and no less than we
She wronged him; this to his "justice" I rejoin!
(*Her tone changes to pathetic entreaty*)
But hear what thou shouldst render unto me
At my imploring! — thou didst touch my hand
(*touching his right hand*)
And wrinkled cheek, low cowering at my feet, —
(*looking up: he assents*)
Thou dost own it! — Lo, I in my turn touch thine,
(*She falls on her knees, clasping his, straining, looking up*)
Claiming, thy suppliant now, that grace of old:
(*raspingly*)
That thou wilt not tear my child out of my arms,
That ye will not slay her; (*sadly*) enough already
are dead (*with drooping head, letting his legs go*).
(*Looking at Polyxena, she staggers to her feet and crosses Odysseus, who "takes stage." Piteously*)
In her I forget my griefs, in her rejoice,
She is my solace for many a vanish'd thing,
(*Polyxena takes her outstretched hands*)
City and servant, staff, and guide to my feet.
(*Erect, turning again against Odysseus*)
Not tyrannously the strong should use their strength,
Nor they which prosper think to prosper ever.
(*Poignantly*)
I too once was, but now am I no more,
(*sadly*)
And all my weal one day hath reft from me.
(*Beseechingly*)
But oh, have thou respect to me! Pity me!
(*Steps away from Polyxena, toward him*)
Go to Achaia's host; persuade them, shame

It is to slay those women whom first ye spared —
(*referring to all the Chorus*)
Tore from the altars, but for pity spared!
Equal among you too for free and slave
Is the law of bloodshed. Even if thou speak ill,
(*with servile flattery*)
Thine high repute will sway them: for the same speech
Sounds not alike from scorn'd men and from wise.

ODYSSEUS (*has been moved, but this flattery restores to him his evil-smiling, superior self-command*)
Hekabê, be instructed, and a good counselor
Count not thy foe, in anger. *Thy* body, through which
I found deliverance, ready am I to save:
(*with an appropriate action*)
I stand thereto.
But what to *them* all I said, I will not unsay:
That, now Troy is taken, we should yield thy child
At our great champion's claim for sacrifice.
(*Sententiously: oratorically*)
Many states suffer, when brave and noble souls
Win nothing more than baser men receive.
Achilles we deem most worthy of honor, who died
For Hellas, a hero! And were it not a shame
Living to treat him lovingly, but *dead*,
No more? What would be said if once again
The host must gather for the strife of foes?
(*With exaggerated rhetorical inflection*)
"Fight shall we?" will they cry, "or cling to life,
"Beholding how unhonor'd go the dead?"
(*With smooth transition*)
Yea, and for myself —
(*insincerely*)

What little the day may bring *me*, is enough! —
Yet fain would I my *tomb* were reverence-crown'd
In men's sight; evermore *this* grace *abides*.
(*Ad hominem*)
Then, if thou 'plain of sufferings, hear this answer:
With *us* there be gray matrons, agéd sires,
Not any whit less wretched than art thou, —
And brides of noblest bridegrooms left forlorn,
Whose corpses yonder dust of Ida (*with a rhetorical gesture*) shrouds.
Endure. And we, if we err in honoring
The brave, content will stand convict of folly.
(*With insinuating disdain*)
Ye barbarians still count not as friends your friends,
Nor honor your heroic dead, — whence prospers
(*virtuously*)
Our Hellas; and *ye* — reap what ye have sown.
[*Sharply, conclusively, as he goes up among the cowering, hating Chorus a few steps.*

CHORUS (*very softly, fearfully, in absolute unison, chants*)
Woe! What a curse is thralldom, ever enduring
Wrong, and by violence conquer'd!

HEKABÊ (*as Odysseus goes up, turns back despairfully, pauses, then extends both hands to Polyxena*)
O my daughter, — my words are wasted in air,
My pleadings for thy life flung vainly forth.
Thou, if thou canst prevail beyond thy mother,
Be instant: Moan! Fall at his knee, —
(*Odysseus turns sharply, defiantly*)
Melt him! Thou hast a plea, for even this
Odysseus hath children, and so may pity thee.
[*She draws back a little, toward right.*
Polyxena steps up toward Odysseus, who hastily,

sternly, wraps his left hand in his cloak and turns his face away from her.

POLYXENA (*speaking half up-stage, gently, proudly*)
I see thee, Odysseus, how thou hide'st thine hand
Under thy mantle, and turn'st away thy face
Lest I should touch thy beard. (*Pauses*) Fear not:
From Zeus thou art safe, from the Suppliant's Champion.
I will go with thee, both because I must,
And — that I long to die. Indeed, were I loth,
I were shown a coward girl, in love with life.
(*Stops, turns partly down-stage, opening her arms wide*)
Yet wherefore should *I live*, whose sire was king
Of all the Phrygians? *That* was *my* life's dawn.
(*Lowering her arms slowly*)
And afterwards I was bred amid bright hopes,—
A bride for kings, whose rivalry ran high,
(*high-voiced, in glad reminiscence*)
Whose hall and hearth should hail me queen to be.
(*Now speaking full-front, to herself*)
And — ah me! — *I* was Lady of the Dames of Ida,
Foremost among the maidens, peer of the *goddesses*, —
Except only for death, — and now, a slave!
(*Low, with deep feeling*)
The name alone constrains me to *love* death,
So inconceivable it is to me!
More — I might light on brutal-hearted lords
Who would for silver buy me — the sister of Hector
And many another hero! — and force me to grind
Grain in his halls, and sweep them, and stand before
A loom, dragging out days of bitterness!
And, somewhere bought, some bondslave (*shuddering*) shall debase

My couch — accounted once a prize for princes.
(*Like a clarion*)
Never! — Free light mine eyes shall last behold:
To death my body will I dedicate.
(*She turns up, resolutely. Odysseus comes down to her. Hekabê starts forward to intervene*)
Take me, Odysseus; and mother, hinder me not,
But consent with me to die ere shame befall,
Unmeet for us. I see no cheer, no hope,
Even in dreams, that ever Fate will grant
Me fortunate weal; and death were happier far
Than life unbeautiful with long pain and toil.

CHORUS (*in soft musical undertones*)

ONE
Strange is the impress,

ANOTHER
Clear-stamp'd upon men,

THE FIRST
Of gentle birth;

TWO (*in unison*)
And ever nobility
Higher aspires in them that worthily wear it.

[*The principals have remained motionless, Polyxena and Odysseus looking at Hekabê, in whom admiration, pity, and fear for her daughter struggle together for speech.*

HEKABÊ
My daughter, nobly said; yet anguish cleaves
Unto that "nobly." . . .
(*To Odysseus, with intense resolution*)
But, if Peleus' son
Must gain this grace, and ye must flee reproach,
Odysseus, — slay not *her;* but leading *me*

Unto Achilles' pyre, stab *me* — spare not!
(*Proudly*)
'Twas I bore Paris — who with his arrows smote
The son of Thetis, and destroy'd!

ODYSSEUS

Not thee,
Gray mother, did Achilles' ghost require
The Achaians to slay, but her!

HEKABÊ (*almost childishly pleading*)

Yet me at least
Ye may slay *with* her, and a twice-deep draught
Of blood shall sink to earth and the dead who claims it!

ODYSSEUS

The girl's one life sufficeth. Death on death
Must not be heap'd. Would god we owed not this!
[*With an admiring glance at Polyxena.*

HEKABÊ

I must — I *must* die with my daughter!

ODYSSEUS

Must?
I knew *not* that I had found a *master*.

HEKABÊ (*flinging herself down, clasping Polyxena's thighs in both arms*)

I
Will clasp her as ivy clings to a young oak!
[*Polyxena, stooping, cherishes her mother's head.*

ODYSSEUS (*speaking still with perfect good temper, but strongly*)

No, not if thou heed those wiser than thou.

HEKABÊ (*clinging convulsively*)

I will not yield, nor ever let go my child!

ODYSSEUS (*menacingly*)

Nor will I leave her here.

POLYXENA (*bending, tenderly*)

Listen to me,
Mother, (*then gently to Odysseus*) and thou, Laertes' son, — Oh, bear
With the hysteric grief of the child-bereft!
(*Odysseus draws back, out of the way. For the next four lines she is loosening her mother's clasp*)
Mother, poor mother, strive not against the strong!
Wouldst thou be flung to the ground, and wound thine old
Flesh with the violence of their thrusting youth?
Be helpless in their arms, and shamed? For this
(*as she raises her*)
Thou wouldst suffer. — Not thou! It is not worthy thee!
(*She looks courage into Hekabê*)
No. — Mother, dearest, give me thy sweet hand
(*taking her left*)
And lay thy cheek to mine, since never more
(*looking up, her cheek by Hekabê's*)
But now for the last time shall I behold
The beam and orb o' the sun. This is the last
(*still holding her mother's hand, but erect*)
Of my greetings: (*turning to her*) O mother who bore me! I pass down.
[*She lets go the hand.*

HEKABÊ (*passionately*)

O daughter! And I shall slave yet in the light.

POLYXENA (*with acute regret*)

Bridegroom nor bridal — nought of all my due!

HEKABÊ (*terribly*)

Pitiable art thou, O my child, but a hell-smit woman I!

POLYXENA (*virginly, remotely exaltedly, — her calm contrasting with her mother's passion*)

There shall I lie in Hades, far from thee!

HEKABÊ (*high and wild*)

Ay me, what shall I do? Where shall I end my life?

POLYXENA (*as above, and with a trace of wonder*)

Of a free father born, I die a slave!

HEKABÊ ("*keening*")

Oh, and my fifty sons, — what are they now to me?

POLYXENA (*to her, simply*)

What shall I tell to Hector, or thy lord?

HEKABÊ (*brought back to herself; simply, but intensely*)

Report me of all women unhappiest!

POLYXENA (*in a gush of feeling, her hands on her mother's breasts*)

O bosom, breasts that sweetly nurtured me!

HEKABÊ (*pressing Polyxena's hands to her bosom, about to embrace her once more*)

O girl-child, stricken with thy untimely fate!

[*Polyxena, to avoid further suffering, almost coldly withdraws and turns to Kasandra on her left, extending her hand to her.*

POLYXENA

Farewell, mother; and Kasandra, farewell!

[*Kasandra, bowing her head, presses the hand in both hers. Hekabê stands helpless and broken, center.*

HEKABÊ

Others "fare well," but not thy mother thus!

POLYXENA (*turning back to her with a glimmer of hope, to cheer her*)

My brother Polydôros —

HEKABÊ (*interrupts her, dully*)

If he lives;

I doubt, so dark is all.

POLYXENA (*with quiet cheer, almost singing*)

He lives;

And he shall close thine eyes, at death.

HEKABÊ (*flinging her arms up, then clasping her head in them, her elbows over her face, and cowering back to the right*)

I — I have died *ere* dying, under my woes.

[*She sinks down, crouching, at the right, leaving Odysseus at center.*

POLYXENA

Muffle my head, Odysseus, and lead me on.

(*Odysseus steps to her, grasping the loose back of her tunic*)

Before ye sacrifice me, my mother's moan

Hath melted my heart, and mine is melting hers.

(*Stretching both arms up, tragically*)

O Light! — for yet may I call upon thy name,

Though all my share in thee is the minute hence

To the sword-edge and Achilles' pyre!

[*Odysseus muffles her head from behind. Hekabê sees it, sees him turn her around and lead her up-stage, and shrieks! — then plunges forward from her crouching posture and lies stretched out flat. Exeunt Odysseus and Polyxena.*

HEKABÊ (*sobs as she lies, her face toward the audience, groping with her right hand*)

O daughter — touch thy mother! Thy hand — give it!

Leave me not childless! . . . I am lost, friends! . . . Oh —

(*raising herself on her hands, animal-wild*)
To see that Helen! For by her fair eyes
(*with the utmost intensity of imprecation*)
She fell'd most *wickedly* high-fortunate Troy!
[*She becomes unconscious.*

Four singers standing in different parts of the stage begin to chant evenly, sorrowfully, beautifully.

CHORUS. ONE

O my fatherland, Ilium, thou art named no more
Mid burgs unspoil'd,

A SECOND

Such a battle-cloud, lightening spears, enshrouds thee o'er,
All round thee coil'd!

A THIRD

Thou art piteously shorn of thy brows' tower-diadem
And smirch'd with stain
Of the reek;

A FOURTH

And thy street ways—my feet shall not tread them,
Ah me, again!

THE FIRST

At the midnight my doom lighted on me, when sleep shed
O'er eyes sweet rain;

THE SECOND

When, from sacrifice-dance and from hush'd songs, on his bed
My lord had lain;

THE THIRD

And the spear on the wall was up-hung,

THE FOURTH

For watchman's ken
Saw near nor far

[*The whole Chorus here surges in.*

ALL

Overtrampling the Ilian plains those sea-borne men,
(*very loudly*)
That host of war!

[*The single singers chant accelerando.*

THE FIRST

I was ranging the braids of my hair 'neath soft snood-fold;

THE SECOND

On mine eyes thrown
Was the gleam from the fathomless depths of mirror gold, —
Ere I sank down
To my rest on the couch;

THE THIRD AND FOURTH (*together*)

But a tumult's tempest-blast
(*fast and loud*)
Swept up the street,

[*And the whole Chorus shouts, full-voiced.*

ALL

And a battle-cry thunder'd — "Ye sons of Greeks, on fast!
Be the castles of Troy overthrown, that home at last
May hail your feet!"

[*Here is the climax of the ode, fortissimo.*

THE FIRST (*very fast*)

From my dear bed,

THE SECOND

My lost bed,

THE THIRD

I sprang

THE FOURTH

Like Dorian maid

But mantle-veiled;

THE FIRST (*less fast*)

And to Artemis' altar I clung!

THE SECOND

Woe's me!

THE THIRD

I pray'd

In vain,

THE FOURTH

And wailed!

THE FIRST (*slower*)

And my lord I beheld lying dead;

THE SECOND

And I was borne

O'er deep salt sea,

THE THIRD (*piningly*)

Looking back upon Troy,

THE FOURTH

By the ship from Ilion torn

ALL FOUR (*together*)

As it sped on the Hellas-ward path:

WHOLE CHORUS (*moaning*)

Then, woe-forlorn,

I swoon'd, — Ah me!

[*All sink down, not flopping as at a signal, but individually: and some prostrate, some reclining, some kneeling then sitting, and all as though naturally overcome with grief.*

KASANDRA (*after a pause, suddenly rousing on her hands, big-eyed*)

Women, Oh, where is Hekabê, sorrow's queen,
Who passeth every man, all womankind,
In woes? No man shall take away her crown (*like a solemn song*).

CHORUS (*two or three together — impatient of more suffering, and disbelieving Kasandra's "second-sight"*)

What now, O hapless voice of evil boding?
Shall they ne'er cease, thy publishings of grief?

KASANDRA (*staring into the audience, weirdly, possessed by her vision, — so impressively that this becomes the true climax of the play*)

O all-afflicted, more than lips can say!
Queen, thou art slain, — thou seest the light no more!
Unchilded, widow'd, cityless, — all-destroy'd!

[*At "Queen", Hekabê vibrates, looks up into Kasandra's face and lifts herself on her hands in the same way.*

HEKABÊ (*dropping again, wailing weakly*)

O wretch! It is my death! I am no more!
("*Keening*")
O my child, my child! Mine anguish shall thrill
Through a wail shrilling wild in the ears of me still —
Which peal'd there but now from the throat of a demon, a herald of ill!

CHORUS (*as above, but softly*)

THE FIRST

Oh, woe for our land —

SECOND AND THIRD (*together*)

Mid smoke and smoulder that crash'd

ALL (*but not loudly*)

To ruin, and her glory spear-spoil'd! —

THE THIRD

I am lash'd
Unto slavery!

KASANDRA (*deeply*)

I in the chambers of death shall dwell!

[*And she lies down like Hekabê: flat.*

CHORUS. THE FIRST (*most musically*)

O breeze, O breeze,

THE SECOND

Over sea-ways racing,

FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD (*together*)

Who onward waftest the ocean-pacing
Fleet-flying keels o'er the mere dark-swelling, —

THE FIRST (*with a high peal of lament*)

Whitherward wilt thou bear me, the sorrow-laden?

THE SECOND

From what slave mart shall the captive maiden
(*in pathos-tremolo*)
Pass into what strange master's dwelling?

THE THIRD

To a Dorian harbor?

THE FOURTH

Or a Phthian, where streaming
Young waters, most beautiful, over the fields flow gleaming?

ALL

Or in Pallas' town on the web shall we tell
Of the brood of Titans, whom lightnings that fell
Flame-wrapt from Zeus, son of Kronos, quell?

[*After a moment's pause, a trumpet sounds, far-off, up-stage. The Chorus, sitting, edges away to either side, leaving a lane for Talthybios. Kasandra sits up likewise, but not Hekabê.*

Talthybios enters at the end of the trumpet note and comes slowly down, addressing the Chorus one by one.

TALTHYBIOS

Where shall I find *her* that of late was queen
Of Ilion, Hekabê, ye maids of Troy?

THE FIRST

Lo there

THE SECOND

Anigh thee

THE THIRD

On the ground outstretch'd,

THE FOURTH

Talthybios,

A FIFTH

Lies she,

A SIXTH

Muffled in her robes.

TALTHYBIOS (*standing with his spear, center, at prostrate Hekabê's head, and looking down on her dishevel'd hair*)

What shall I say, Zeus? — that thou look'st on men,
Or that this fancy false we vainly hold
For nought, who deem there is a race of gods
While chance controlleth all things among men?
This — was she not the gold-dower'd Phrygians' queen?
This — was she not all-prosperous Priam's wife?
And now her city is all spear-o'erthrown,
And she a slave, agéd and childless, lies
Groveling, and strews with dust her hapless head.
(*He looks up with the deep pagan loathing for wretchedness*)
Pah! Faugh! . . . I am old, and may it be mine,
Before *I* sink into some shame, to die!

(*Tenderly to her*)
Arise, O ill-starr'd! Upraise thy snowy head!

HEKABÊ (*faintly, questioningly*)
Ha?
(*Then she struggles up till she sits, her legs bent to the right, and speaks up to him, bitterly*)
Who art thou that wilt not let my body lie?
(*She drops on to her propping left arm and bows her head; sullenly*)
Be who thou wilt! — Why rouse me from my despair?

TALTHYBIOS
I am Talthybios, the Danaans' minister,
Of Agamemnon sent, O Queen, for thee.

HEKABÊ (*scrambles eagerly to her feet, saying sharply, almost gladly*)
Friend, friend, art thou come because the Achaians will
To slay me too at the tomb? Welcome would be thy speech!
Haste we! Let us make speed! Lead me, old man!

TALTHYBIOS
Woman (*solemnly, sadly*),
That thou may'st bury thy dead child I come
In quest of thee —

HEKABÊ (*reeling*)
Woe! — What wouldst thou say?
Not as to one death-doom'd came'st thou to me,
But heralding *new* woes?
(*In rising lamentation*) Thou hast perish'd, my child!
Torn from thy mother! Childless, as touching thee,
Am I — O miserable! — (*To him, reproaching*) How did ye do it?

With reverence, or brute outrage, as to a foe,
Did ye go to kill her? Speak, even unkindly!
[*She stands down right, looking up at him.*
Kasandra balances her on the left.
Talthybios stands center, delivering the following, full front.

TALTHYBIOS

Two-fold tear-tribute wouldst thou win from me
In pity for thy child: mine eyes shall weep
The tale as by the tomb when she was dying.
(*Then, launching on his tale, strongly*)
There met was all Achaia's warrior-host, —
Throng'd by the grave for thy girl's sacrifice.
Taking Polyxena by the hand, the son
Of Achilles set her on the crest of the mound.
I stood close by, and certain chosen youths
Of the Achaians, ready to hold thy lamb
If she should struggle. Then from a cup all gold
Achilles' son to his dead father pour'd
The drink-offerings, and sign'd to me to proclaim
Silence unto the whole Achaian host.
Standing beside him in the midst, I cried
(*with a full, round, sustained, musical shout*)
"Silence, Achaians! Hush'd be all the host!
Peace! Not a word!" . . . So breathless still'd the folk.
Then spake he: "O son of Peleus, father mine,
(*warmly, richly*)
Drink these propitiatory drops from me,
Ghost-raising, and draw nigh to drink pure blood
Dark-welling from a maid, which we will give thee,
The army and I. To us be gracious thou:
Give us to loose the cables of our ships,

And fair return for all from Ilion
Till each attain his fatherland!" So spake he,
And in that prayer united all the host.
(*More consonantally*)
Then grasping the gold-plated hilt of his sword,
He drew it from the sheath, and sign'd to the youths
To seize the maid; but she being 'ware thereof
Spake forth this speech:
(*softly, mellifluously*)
"O Argives, who have laid my city low,
Free-willing I die; let no man touch my flesh,
For I will yield my throat up with good heart.
But leave me free as ye slay me, by the gods,
That I may die *free;* for among the dead
I who am royal would feel shame to be call'd
A slave!" And like a great sea roar'd the host
(*in a sudden deep bass — faster*).
The king Agamemnon bade the youths let go
The maiden; they obey'd; and when she heard
This word of her masters, grasping her robe, she rent
It from the shoulder down to the waist, and show'd
(*slowly*)
Her breasts, and bosom, fair as in a statue;
And bowing to the earth her knee, she spoke
A word of all words most heroic: "Lo
(*most musically*)
Here, in my breast, if thou wouldst strike it, stab!
If higher, see here my throat is bared to thee." —
(*Softly but clearly*)
And he, loth and yet fain, for ruth of the girl,
Cleaves with the steel the channels of her breath.
Gush'd the life-springs; but she, even in death,
Had chiefest care seemly to fall, and hide

What should be hidden. . . .
(*More prosaically*)
When under that death-stroke
She had spent her breath, no Argive to the same
Task hied, but some strew'd leaves on the dead form
And some heap'd high the pyre with pitchy brands, —
And whoso help'd not, heard rebuke: "Base heart,
(*dramatically*)
Standest thou still, with nothing for the girl?
Nought wilt thou give to one of matchless heart?
Nothing to deck her at all, noblest of soul?"
(*Then tenderly to Hekabê*)
Such is the tale I tell of thy child dead.
In motherhood most blest I count thee of
All women, and most evil-destinied!

CHORUS (*still sitting on each side up-stage, very softly chanting in unison*)
On Priam's line and city some dread bale
Hath pour'd this doom from the gods!

HEKABÊ (*half turns to face the audience, calm now and resigned, with simple humanity*)
Daughter, I cannot from my soul blot out
Thine agony, that I should wail it not.
Yet hast thou barr'd the worst, proclaim'd to me
So noble! The noble never 'neath fortune's stress
Marreth his nature, but is good alway.
(*Then with a little hopeless gesture*)
Ah, unavailing arrows of the mind!
(*Then, partly to Kasandra, partly to the audience*)
To lay her out, as meet is, how can I?
Yet as I may, — for lo, what plight is mine!
Jewels from fellow-captives will I gather,
If haply any to our lords unknown

Hath any treasure of home hid in these tents.
(*She gazes up, lost in memory*)
O stately halls, O home so happy once!
O rich in fair abundance, goodliest offspring,
Priam! — And I a gray head crown'd with sons!
How are we brought to nought, of olden pride
Strip'd bare! And lo,
(*with an approach to astonishment — directly to the audience*) we mortals are puff'd up!
One of us for the riches of his house,
Another for honor in the mouths of men, —
These things are nought! All vain the heart's devisings,
The vauntings of the tongue!
(*With quiet conviction*) Most blest is he
To whom no ills befall as days wear on.

CHORUS (*as before, a little louder*)
O hapless, how a god, whose hand on thee
Is heavy, above all mortals heaps thee pain!

KASANDRA (*seeming to look off, up right, and by her look and tone bringing the whole Chorus unevenly to their feet and turning Hekabê and Talthybios to see too*)
But lo, I see our master towering nigh, —
Agamemnon. Friends, henceforth hold we our peace.

TALTHYBIOS (*his back to the audience; lifting his spear*)
Draw near, make speed; for I discern a breeze
(*turning, head high, to feel it*)
Upspringing, home to waft us even now!
(*In profile, looking up, as Hekabê's Attendants unobtrusively come to her aid*)
Fair voyage be ours to Hellas! Fair the plight
Wherein, from these toils freed, we find our homes.

CHORUS (*as they slowly pass up and out through the cyclorama, chanting hopelessly; Kasandra following cerèmonially; then Hekabê between her Attendants, brokenly*)

To the tents, O friends, — to the haven, fare!
The yoke of thralldom our necks must bear.
Fate knows no pity, Fate will not spare!

[*Heard mostly* through *the cyclorama, as Talthybios follows them up, his long white hair gleaming on his swinging red cloak, spear in hand.*

As the Curtain starts to fall, another distant trumpet-note sounds.

FINIS

A CHRISTMAS MIRACLE PLAY

Adapted from

The Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors

in the

Coventry Cycle of Miracles

As presented at the John Herron Art Institute in
Indianapolis, December, 1915

INTRODUCTION

EVEN as Greek tragedy developed from primitive nature-worship, so "Miracles", as they were termed in England, evolved directly out of Christian ritual. They at first illustrated religious rites and later recounted sacred history in a pious spirit less eager for entertainment than for edification through wonder, awe, and revelation. They were wholly "amateur", ingenuous, devotional, and quite unconscious of any "art" save that of display, — the basic art of the theater. Of course they became more and more popular and homely after being taken out from the interior of the church, — where solemn acting of such dramatic moments in Christian legend as the Resurrection and the Nativity began even in the Darkest Ages to bring home to the eyes of the ignorant worshiper their Latin-muffled meaning, — and set forth in the vernacular, in a crudely rhymed and metrical speech at first wholly didactic, on the steps of the church or later on a movable stage in the city mart or green. The secular clergy of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries continued to perform them, but with more and more assistance from the Guilds, or organized "unions" of craftsmen and merchants in each little medieval town. These Guilds habitually paraded with floats or "pageants", in honor of the king's coming or to celebrate a holiday (much as do our Templars, etc., to-day), long before they began in the fourteenth

century to assume the independent production of the Miracles. But on the holy day of Corpus Christi in early summer there occurred in most towns a very elaborate procession of this kind, both clerical and lay, in which moved pageant-wagons representing with properties, costumes, and masks the principal events of sacred history. The Guilds rivaled one another in the splendid preparation of these pageants — which presently became so popular that the purely religious procession was separated from them and took place on the following day. Throughout the holiday, and as the entertainment grew and became an institution throughout two or three days even, the long, heavy pageant-wagons on their six wheels — a curtained room below for dressing, with an open platform stage above it — were trundled about the streets, stopping at preannounced spots, where ofttimes scaffolds and stands had been built for the spectators, to enact bit by bit their shows of Holy Writ or legend.

By Chaucer's time, the second half of the fourteenth century, such was the regular course in every considerable town in England, and so it continued until the Reformation. The community decked itself out, received strangers, exerted itself to keep order, and its Guilds did it honor and profit with their plays. The Grocers, perhaps, would begin with a play of Adam and Eve — because they were the purveyors of apples; then the Shipwrights would build the Ark, and so on; and the "Shearmen and Taylors" would impersonate the humble Shepherds of Christmas. Every artisan in the town contributed his pennies to one or another pageant. In 1539 the mayor of Coventry (where our particular Christmas Miracle was performed) wrote

that the poor commoners were at such expense with their plays and pageants that they fared the worse all the year after. Guilds were fined by the municipality if they failed or were slow to make the annual production, ay, and individuals were so fined if they had not learned their parts! Some Guilds came to give their pageants into the charge of one person, — a professional, if only part-time, manager, — who took in the dues and saw to their expenditure: on the upkeep of the wagons, their housing during the year, the wages and drinks of the eight or twelve men who dragged them about at performances, the properties used on them, the elaborate costumes of the actors, refreshment at rehearsals and between shows, and finally the pay of the players, — two shillings to God, for instance, and four shillings to Pilate! For such responsibility he received a handsome sum himself.

From Coventry we have happily detailed accounts of these expenses: of Herod's painted mask and blue satin gown, of the Angels' wings and albs and suits of gold skins, of the Doomsday "earthquake", costing 3s. 4d., — 4d. for attending it and 2d. for covering it. Music is hired without stint. A keeper of the playbook and prompter is a regular employé. But of the authors we hear nothing; royalties were unknown. Any one who chose apparently could amend or rewrite the Miracle, subject to the Guild's approval; and there is preserved, in the varying vocabularies and more and more complex stanzaic forms in the cycles, most interesting evidence of the periods at which different Miracles were rewritten, with invasive homely humor and horseplay, and increasing command of pathos and sublimity as well. There was, no doubt,

also much improvisation and added "business" by the actors. The pious soon anathematized the vulgar who grinned at sacred things lewdly presented, and any one learned enough in church lore to have first composed one of these plays might only have felt glad to remain anonymous. Yet monarchs like Henry V, Richard III, and Henry VII graced with their presence the Coventry performances, and in the *C Mery Talys* (Hundred Merry Tales) of 1526 we can read of a preacher closing a sermon with "Yf you beleve not me, then for a more suffycyente auctoryte go your way to Coventre, and there ye shall se them all playd in Corpus Cristi play." Only at the Reformation was strict religious sentiment strong enough to banish them forever.

At the end of the manuscript of our ensuing Miracle are written these words, so quaint that I take space to set them forth in full:

Fynes lude de taylars and scharmen
Finis Play of Tailors and Shearmen

Tys matter | nevly correcte be Robart Croo |
This matter newly corrected by Robert Croo

the xiiijth dey of marche | fenysschid in
the 14th day of March finished in

the yere of our lorde god | MCCCCC & xxxiiijte |
the year of our Lord God 1534,

then beyng mayre mastur Palmer |
then being mayor Master Palmer,

also mastris of the seyd fellyschipp Hev Corbett |
also masters of the said fellowship Hugh Corbett,

Randall Pynkard and | John Baggeley.
Randall Pynkard and John Baggeley.

Note how public and "community" a matter it was. The names of the mayor and of the masters of the

Guild are at least as important as that of the book-bearer, Robert Croo.

It is a long pageant, this Christmas Play, — probably a combination of two or several pageants originally separate but now, in the decadence of the genre, combined and given to one prosperous Guild to care for. But we know too that on the Continent there occurred very early indeed — in the tenth century — a development of the Christmas rite that transplanted to the façade of the church a less ceremonial than dramatic presentation of the Nativity, the Shepherds, the Star, the Three Kings, — ay, and the blustering Herod, fawning Nuntius, timidly advising Soldiers of our sixteenth-century play, — already combined, and followed by a play of the Massacre of the Innocents. Around Christmas and Easter naturally centered the first religious drama. Liturgical plays were given outdoors in England at those holidays even in the twelfth century; and all through the thirteenth, English ecclesiastics thundered against the play-acting of the clerics. It was probably this discouragement from above that caused churchmen to abandon to the Guilds their germinal but intensely dramatic Miracles. And in this long evolution much has crept into our particular pageant. First comes an exposition by Isaiah, which in the following adaptation has been split into three parts inserted at intervals in the subsequent action. Then comes the Annunciation, here slightly cut; the homely, gently humorous scene with Joseph, and the journey to Bethlehem; the Shepherds, with indications of much business, eating, drinking, singing, etc., which has been omitted hereinafter; the entrance of a second Prophet, and a long didactic

duologue between him and Isaiah, here much shortened and given to an Interlocutor sitting amidst the audience (who should not be mentioned on the program but should speak suddenly, surprisingly, with perfect naïveté), to divide the earlier parts from the Herod scenes; and thence the action proceeds as detailed below (with a few cuts or rearrangements of verses) as far as the scene of the massacre of the innocents — which of course in a play intended for children's eyes has been wholly omitted. The pageant originally closed with Herod's exit.

A few old stage directions are preserved in the text. They show that there must have been stepladders to the top of the wagon both in front of it and behind; but it is hard to see even then how the effects of distance so often referred to in the speeches were obtained. Joseph's leaving of Mary can only have been indicated on the wagon-top, and the journey of the pair to Bethlehem can only have been their descent of the stairs to the street. The second and third Shepherds seem to have entered in the street among the audience; we know that the Three Kings severally did so; and it looks very much as though the curtains before the 'tiring room on the ground level of the wagon were parted to discover the Holy Family for the Shepherds' homage, the Kings' worship, and the Angel's warning. Herod, we are expressly told, "raged" both on the pageant stage and in the street, — rushing about, perhaps, smiting spectators with his falchion!

This intimacy, and childlike joy in mere acting, it is necessary for us to reproduce if we are to take the delight in our Christmas Miracle which our ancestors in Coventry took. We cannot feel the same thrill of

vicarious vengeance that probably heightened for them the portrayal in Herod of a neighboring landlord and bully; but the rôle is for us immortalized by Hamlet's denunciation. Not all of us, perhaps, can enter heartily into old Joseph's comic complaints, or treat his quick suspicions with levity, as the playwright intended. We need, moreover, the historical knowledge that French only ceased to be the court language of England in the fourteenth century, before we can appreciate the opening shouts of the Nuntius — in whom are combined the tumbler, fool, and "Vice" with the royal chamberlain and herald; though the fact that these shouts *are* in old French quickly removes our fantastic Herod from the simple actuality of the preceding scenes. Whether in 1534 the Three Kings rode actual or artificial horses through the crowd, we know not; but in our theater we must give them the plainest little wooden hobbies, and trust to our audience's sympathetic, childlike imagination.

And besides imagination, there is requisite a readiness to take old creeds for granted, to accept medieval Christianity as one accepts the myths in Greek drama; and a simplicity of mind that will laugh unreservedly one minute and be touched to pious fire the next. Here is an art form cultivated for six hundred years by all Europe, — the most democratic art of the time, — educative, religious, entertaining, cultural, and when understood beautiful. The meters may be very joggy, the rhymes highly inexact, the language prolix and ungrammatical, poetic instinct largely wanting; but the Miracle Play is none the less a form of literature, and is all the more a form of drama, popular, communal, expressive, and therefore eternal.

CHARACTERS

THE PROPHET ISAIAH, a tall, authoritative actor of austere face and powerful, flexible, musical voice. He wears a long white beard, and is robed wholly in black, with a cowl.

THE ANGEL GABRIEL, a player with magnetic, pervasive personality and sweet, strong voice, "made up", wigged, and garbed exactly like the Angel in Rossetti's picture *Ecce Ancilla Domini* — except for the halo and the flaming feet.

THE VIRGIN MARY, a Madonna type fitting as closely as possible the same picture: — very young, mild, sweet, with a "Maude Adams" voice.

JOSEPH, a gray-bearded character, robed and cowled in brown and purple, with an old man's comic voice, but sympathetic and possessed of a certain homely dignity.

THREE SHEPHERDS, the First a young fellow with a big voice, the Second an older man, careworn, with a rather plaintive voice, and the Third a young, enthusiastic, almost poetic yokel. All their speech is rustic, uncultured. They wear burlap tunics; thongs about their legs; big boots with clodhopper soles that show, toeing in, when they kneel; soft, loose hats; and they carry crooks. The First has his shepherd's pipe about his neck, and the Third has mittens at his belt.

NUNTIUS, a very agile little fellow, grotesquely made up (perhaps with a bent nose and sharp chin), and clad in fool's motley, not too garish, too vividly contrasting, but hung all about with vari-colored ribbons tipped with little bells that tinkle as he leaps and prances and dashes hither and yon. He should be able to pronounce French. He carries a bauble.

KING HEROD, an *actor*, equipped with a sense of character, an instinct for the theatrically effective, and a great, terrible voice. Originally he wore a mask: we should replace that with a *bright carmine* make-up, with triangular Assyrian beard and side whiskers. His hands, of course, too, must be carmined. His nose may be hooked, his brows bristled, and a Satanic twist be lent to his eyes. He wears a high crown, with outspreading points, made of sheet brass ("art brass"), whence spring tufts of red feathers higher yet. His arms are tightly sleeved in red, his body sheathed in pointed scales of brass, with a short red skirt flanked by over-lapping crescents of alternate brass and red, and red tights and pointed shoes. He bears a wicked, curved sword with fantastic hilt. He is at once resplendent and horrific, gaudy and grim.

THE KING OF ARABY, an oriental, turbaned, venerable figure, gowned in purple with touches of gold, with long, slender white beard, and a deep, musical voice.

THE KING OF TAURUS, a Frank, flaxen-haired, blond, in the prime of life, robed in green and gold, with a close-fitting, unconventional crown.

THE KING OF AGINAR, a black man, young, half nude, with a royal cloak of white patterned with yellow,

and a strange Abyssinian crown. His trunks, tights, and shoes are as dark as his skin. If he must, he may wear a black jersey instead of making up his body. His voice should be strong and negro-like. Perhaps, in the Christmas spirit of fraternity, an actual negro could be found to take the part. All these three Kings carry gifts in their left hands and hold their hobbyhorses before them with their right hands.

THE SOLDIERS OF HEROD, one or more pair: preferably tall, lanky youths, with very tall and very willowy spears that shiver exaggeratingly whenever *they* do! They are unobtrusively dressed in grayish brown, with homemade breastplates (it would be misplaced emphasis to hire Roman armor for them), kilts, and helmets perhaps made of old derby hats, brimless and gilded. They should look queer, — and should quake, with knocking knees, whenever Herod glances at them.

There are also an ANGEL CHOIR, above or within, MUSICIANS, concealed, and an INTERLOCUTOR in the audience.

THE CAST OF THE PLAY AT ITS ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

ISAIAH	St. Clair Jones
GABRIEL	S. A. Eliot, Jr.
MARY	Miss Etta Ward
JOSEPH	Harrison Paul Brown
SHEPHERDS	Howard B. Hill G. W. Cronyn J. A. Reichman
NUNTIUS	Wayman Adams
HEROD	Johann Berthelsen
KINGS	W. Ballard Long Calvin Gerlach Howard B. Hill
SOLDIERS	Oliver Fuller Carl C. Graf

A CHRISTMAS MIRACLE PLAY

THE SCENE. *The Scene must be divided between an inner and an outer stage. On the inner stage are set three pictures: the first a reproduction, simply completed on stage right, of Rossetti's picture above mentioned; the second a representation of the stable of the Nativity, which need be no more than a low rafter supported in the middle by a post behind which is concealed an amber light like a dim lantern, shadowily suggesting straw-piled stalls, etc., in the further background, into which Mary can disappear; and the third a purely imaginative backing for the Angel, perhaps blue, perhaps gold, but very simple and "projecting." The outer stage may be a mere platform with steps down to the audience; but if the theater is wide enough and otherwise architecturally adaptable, some very effective entrances, etc., can be obtained by building stairs up from the central platform to either side and providing passage, behind, from one of these upper side exits to the other. In any case, on either side of the steps should project a section of platform, on one of which Isaiah stands all through the performance, and on the other of which is set the bizarre throne of Herod — a black and gold chair with wide, clawlike arms and spray-pointed back, expressive of its owner. Both of these sections must have a perpendicular backing, preferably a black flat, masking the foot of the stairs and framing the platform. Behind one of the flats the musi-*

cian or musicians may sit who play while Herod sleeps; behind the other may be the prompter's post and the retreat to which the Angel periodically retires. Over the curtains that separate the outer from the inner stage is the Star, unseen save when brightened on the dimmer at its proper cues. A spot-light in the rear of the audience is essential to the lighting of the outer stage, but should never be used on the pictures in the inner stage. A special small spot-light may be put behind one of the side-flats, to aid in lighting the inner scenes and to shine halo-like on the Angel when he advances thence to Joseph, the Shepherds, or the Kings.

In the ensuing stage directions the existence of the stairs at the sides of the forestage is presupposed, but when, assuming their absence, mere entrance or exit by the outer stage's wings is inadvisable, a different entrance or exit is suggested, usually through the audience. The three Kings ride their hobbyhorses through the audience in any case, preferably converging upon the forestage steps from three different doors.

Though all this may sound very complex, the Christmas Play is simplicity itself, and might be done on a naked schoolroom floor. Its production at Indianapolis on such a stage as that here indicated was so successful, however, that it has been thought best to give the stage directions as there elaborated in practice.

When the house lights are dimmed out and the spot-light is turned upon the curtains behind the front platform, before the inner stage, Isaiah comes through these curtains and walks, stately, to his post, in front of and against the right wing; and there, raising his hand with fingers touching in the papal blessing, he speaks.

ISAIAH (*majestically*)

The Sovereign that seëth every se-cret,
He save you all, and make you perfect and sound,
And give us grace with his mercy to meet,
For now in great misery mankind is bound:
The Serpent hath given us so mortal a wound
That no creature is able us forto release;
Yet lo, where a remedy shall arise! —
Then shall much mirth and joy increase,
In this same wise:
For though that Adam be 'demn'd to death
With all his children, as Abel and Seth,
Yet — "Ecce Virgo Concipieth"
That shall bring forth the grain of holiness.

[*In lowering his hand, he refers the audience to the curtains, which now part, revealing the picture "Ecce Ancilla Domini", lighted from the sides. When the curtains are fully drawn, the Angel speaks, motionless.*

GABRIEL

Hail, Mary, full of grace!
Our Lord God is with thee.
Above all women that ever was,
Lady, blessëd may't thou be!

[*Mary, huddled on her pallet in terrified awe, speaks quaveringly, as though she had heard but could not see the Angel, and were almost afraid of madness.*

MARY

Almighty Father and King of bliss,
From all dis-ease thou save me now!
For inwardly my spirit troubled is,
That I am amazed, and know not how.

GABRIEL

Dread thee no-thing, maiden, of this.

From Heaven above hither am I sent
Of embassage from that King of bliss
Unto thee, lady and virgin reverent,
Saluting thee here as most excellent,
Whose virtue above all other doth abound, —
Wherefore in thee grace shall be found:
The Holy Ghost in thee shall light
And shadow thy soul so with vir-tue
From the Father that is on height —
(*Mary shrinks and trembles yet more, and Gabriel, without at all interrupting the regular rhythm of his speech, alters his tone to one of tenderness*)
These wordës, turtle, they be full true!
This child that of thee shall be born
Is the Second Person in Trinity:
He shall save that [1] was forlorn
And the Fiendë's power destroy shall He!
Wherefore discomfort thee not, Ma-ry, —
For to God onpossible nothing may be!

MARY (*trembling still, but inspired*)
Now an it be that Lordë's will
Of my bo-dy to be born forto be, —
His high pleasures forto fulfill,
As his own handmaid I submit me.

GABRIEL (*exultingly*)
Now blessëd be the time set
That thou wast born in thy degree,
(*Backing away very impressively, almost mesmerically to her*)
For now is the knot surely knit,
And God conceivéd in Trinity!

[1] A second "that" is required but not supplied, and the actor's delivery must clarify the sense.

[*He disappears behind the curtains, right. Mary is overcome, half-fainting by her bed. Joseph, leaning on a staff, descends the left stair. He speaks before he reaches the bottom or is in a position to see Mary, in a kindly, highly modulated, old man's voice, with a suggestion of self-conscious superiority.*

JOSEPH

Mary, my wife so dear!
How do ye, dame, and what cheer
Is with you this tide?
[*Crossing by her, he goes up-stage, without a glance.*

MARY (*still in a kind of trance*)

Truly, hus-band, I am here
Our Lord's will to abide.

JOSEPH (*stopping and turning at the strange sound of her voice, seeing her terrified, tearful expression, and thinking she was been scolded or "shent" by some one; indignantly*)

What! I trow that we be all shent!
Say, woman, who hath been here sith I went,
To rage with thee?

MARY

Sir, here was neither man nor man's even [1]
But only the Sound of our Lord God in Heaven!
[*But Joseph has been observing her, marveling at her, and now breaks out.*

JOSEPH

Say not so, woman! For shame, let be!
Ye be with child, against all right!
For sooth, this child, dame, is not mine!
Alas that ever with mine eyne

[1] Anything equal or similar to man.

I should see this sight!
(*Indignantly*)
Tell me, woman, whose is this child?

MARY

None but yours, husband so mild,
And that shall be seen, I wis.
[*She is still stunned, and cannot fathom how it can have come to her. But Joseph pounds the floor with his staff.*

JOSEPH

But mine? Alas, alas! Why say ye so?
Welaway, woman! Now may I go
Beguiled as many another is!
[*He is both aggrieved and touched in his vanity.*

MARY (*coming half-awake, and putting out one hand to him*)

Nay, truly, sir, ye be not beguiled!
Nor (*fervently*) with spot of sin I am not defiled, —
Trust it well, hus-band.

JOSEPH

Hus-band, i' faith! And that a-cold!
Ah, welaway, Joseph, as thou are old!
Like a fool now may I stand
And *trust!*
(*Then, turning upon her almost violently*)
But in faith, Ma-ry, thou *art* in sin!
(*Plaintively*)
So much as I have cherished thee, dame, and all thy kin!
Behind my back to serve me thus!
(*He leaves her and comes through the inner proscenium, addressing the audience*)

All old men, ensample take by me.
How I am beguiled here may you see!
To wed so young a child!
(*Half turns back to her*)
Now farewell, Mary. I leave thee here alone.
Woe worth thee, dame, and thy works each one,
(*stumping down-stage away from her*)
For I will no more be beguiled
For friend nor foe!
(*He reaches the steps, pauses, lifts a woeful face to the audience, sighs*)
Now of this deed I am so dull,
And of my life I am so full,
No farther may I go!

[*He sits down on the steps, hunched against the right wing, and dropping his chin on his chest, falls asleep. Mary stays sitting, motionless, dazed. The Angel glides out from behind the right curtain and advances above Joseph, the spot-light behind the right wing glowing upon him.*

GABRIEL (*standing still above Joseph*)
Arise up, Joseph, and go home again
Unto Mary thy wife that is so free.
To comfort her look that thou be fain,
For, Joseph, a clean maiden is she.
She hath conceived without any train
The Second Person in Trinity;
Jesu shall be His name, cer-tain,
And all this world *save* shall He!
(*Joseph looks up suddenly, frightened*)
Be not aghast!

[*And slowly the Angel disappears behind the right wing.*

JOSEPH (*not rising yet, but speaking upward happily*)
Now Lord, I thank thee with heart full sad;
But of these tidings I am so glad
That all my care away is cast!
(*Gets up, with his staff's help*)
Wherefore to Mary I will in haste!
(*He goes to Mary and kneels to her, in profile, his staff sinking humbly too*)
Ah, Mary, Mary! I kneel full low!
Forgive me, sweet wife, for now I know
Of your good governance, though I did thee misname.
Mercy, Mary! While I live
Will I never, sweet wife, thee grieve
In earnest nor in game!

MARY (*timidly putting her hand over his head*)
Now that Lord in Heaven, sir, He you forgive, —
And I do forgive you in his name.

JOSEPH (*and the humor of the line must not be lost*)
Now truly, sweet wife, to you I say the same. —
(*He gets up, — businesslike*)
But now to Bethlehem must I me bring.

MARY (*rising too*)
And I will walk with you on the way.
(*Joseph takes down the blue cloak that hangs behind the couch*)
I trust in God, Almighty King,
To speed right well in our jour-ney.

JOSEPH (*covering her with the cloak*)
Now I thank you, Mary, of your good-ness,
That ye my wordës will not blame;
And sith that to Bethlem we shall us dress,
Go we together, in God's holy name!

[*She leaning on him, he on his staff, they pass off, up the left stair, out of the spot-light into darkness.*

The curtains close, and as quickly as possible the scene behind them is changed to the stable. Meanwhile Isaiah speaks.

ISAIAH

Behold, a maid hath conceiv'd a child
And got us more grace than ever men had;
And her maidenhood nothing defiled —
Deputed to bear the Son, Almighty God!
Lo, sufferers, now may you be glad,
For of this maiden all we may be fain;
For Adam that now lies in sorrows full sad —
Her glorious birth shall redeem him again
From bondage and thrall.
Now be merry, every man!
For this deed briefly in Israel shall be done,
And before the Father Triune,
That shall glad us all!

[*The spot-light swings, and reveals Joseph and Mary on the right stair, descending, — she very feeble and weary. Now, or as soon as possible hereafter, the curtains part again, on the stable scene. If there are no stairs, the scene must first be revealed, and then Joseph and Mary reënter; she then sinks down on the front steps before it, in silhouette.*

JOSEPH (*despairfully, though he means it for comfort*)

Now to Bethlehem have we leaguës three.
(*Looking up*)
The day is nigh spent: it draweth toward night.
Fain at your ease, dame, I would ye should be, —
For ye groan all wearily, it seemeth in my sight.

MARY

God have mercy, Joseph, my spouse so dear!
All prophets hereto doeth bear wit-ness:
The weary time now draweth near
That my child will be born, which is King of bliss.
Unto some place, Joseph, kindly me lead,
That I may rest me with grace in this tide.
(*Standing and praying with arms outstretched*)
The light of the Father over us both spread
And the grace of my Son with us here abide!

JOSEPH (*indicating the recesses of the scene*)

Lo, blessëd Mary, here shall ye land, —
Chief chosen of our Lord, cleanest in degree!
And I for help to town will I wend;
Is not this the best, dame? What say ye?
[*And he leads her within the inner proscenium.*

MARY (*turning appealingly*)

God have mercy, Joseph, husband so meek!
Heartily I pray you, go now from me. —

JOSEPH

That shall be done in haste, Mary so sweet.
The comfort of the Holy Ghost leave I with thee.
(*Mary disappears in the dark stalls up-stage. Joseph turns round and starts off up the left stair again, or perhaps out through the audience*)
Now to Bethlehem straight will I wend
To get some help for Mary so free.
Some help of women God may me send,
That Mary, full of grace, pleaséd may be.
[*Ending as he disappears.*

Now on the height of the left stair a Shepherd advances, one hand way up, scanning the heavens. He shouts.

SHEPHERD

Now God that art in Trinity,
Thou save my fellowës and me!
For I know not where my sheep nor they be,
  This night it is so cold!
(*He falls to beating himself for warmth, and blows upon his fingers, and then looks up again hopelessly*)
Now is it nigh the middest of the night.
These weathers are dark, and dim of light,
(*peering about*)
That of them I can have no sight,
  Standing here on this wold.
But now to make their heartës light,
Now will I full right
  Stand upon this low
And to them cry with all my might —
  Full well my voice they know —
What ho, fellows! Ho! (*louder*) Ho! (*loudest*) Ho!

[*Away across on the height of the other stair — or, if the First Shepherd had to appear merely on the platform before the scene, in which case the curtains would have to close to prevent the spot-light on him from marring the atmosphere of the stable scene behind him, else at the back of the auditorium — two more Shepherds appear. The First Shepherd, if he is not already on the platform, comes down to it slowly.*

SECOND SHEPHERD (*to the Third*)

Hark, Sim, hark, I hear our brother on the low!
That is his voice, right well I know.
Therefore toward him let us go
  And follow his voice aright.
(*They descend the stair, or approach the platform*

slowly, peering about as though through a foggy night. Suddenly they spy the First Shepherd)
See, Sim, see where he doth stand!
(*They quicken their pace*)
I am right glad we have him found!
(*They arrive by him*)
Brother, where hast thou been so long, —
And it is so cold this night?

FIRST SHEPHERD

Eh, friends, there came a wind with a mist suddenly
That forth of my ways went I,
And great heaviness then made I
And was full sore a-fright.
Then forto go wist I not whither,
But travel'd on this low hither and thither;
I was so weary of this cold weather
That near past was my might!

SECOND SHEPHERD (*paternally, with the philosophy of one who lives in the present only*)

Brother, now we be past that fright,
And it is far within the night;
Full soon will spring the day-light, —
It draweth full near the tide.
[*And then outglows the Star above their heads!*

THIRD SHEPHERD (*in amazement, dropping down one or two steps, front, and pointing*)

Brother! Look up, and behold!
What thing is yonder that shineth so bright?
As long as ever I have watch'd my fold
Yet saw I never such a sight
In field!
(*Then he bursts out jubilantly*)
Aha! Now is come the time old fathers hath told,

That in the winter's night so cold
A child of maiden born be He wo'ld
In Whom all prophecies shall be fulfill'd!

FIRST SHEPHERD

Truth it is, without nay;
So said the prophet Isay: —
That a child should be born of a maid so bright
In winter nigh the shortest day,
Or, else, in the middle of the night.

SECOND SHEPHERD (*devoutly awe-struck*)

Lovéd be God, most of might,
That our grace is to see that sight;
Pray we to him, as is right, —
If that his will it be, —
That we may have knowledge of this signification,
And why it appeareth in this fashion;
And ever to him let us give laudation
In earth while that we be!

[*Angels, behind the Star, sing "Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terrâ pax omnibus!"*

THIRD SHEPHERD (*ecstatically*)

Hark, they sing above in the cloudës clear!
Heard I never so merry a choir!
Now, gentle brother, draw we near
To hear their harmony!

FIRST SHEPHERD (*quivering with deep emotion*)

Brother, mirth and solace is come us among!
For, by the sweetness of their song,
God's son is come, whom we have look'd for long, —
As signifyeth this star that we do see!

[*All kneel trembling, backs to audience, low-bowed, on the front steps.*

Reënter Joseph down left stair or through audience.

JOSEPH (*comically*)

Now, Lord, this noise that I do hear,
With this great solemnity,
Greatly amended hath my cheer;
I trust high news shortly will be.
[*The curtains, if closed, here reopen.*
The Angels sing again, louder.
Enter Mary from the stalls, holding a swaddled baby.

MARY

Ah, Joseph, husband, hither anon!
My child is born that is King of bliss!
[*She holds the baby out to him, as he goes into the stable to her.*

JOSEPH

Now welcome to me, thou Maker of man!
With all the homage that I can
Thy sweet mouth here will I kiss.
[*Taking the baby, cautiously kissing it, and holding it gingerly from him.*

MARY

Ah! Joseph, husband, my child waxeth cold,
And we have no fire to warm him with.
[*Hinting that the child might be more comfortably held.*

JOSEPH (*starting, clasping it awkwardly*)

Now in mine arms I shall him fold,
King of all kings by field and by frith:
He might have had better, an himself wo'ld,
Than the breathing of these beasts to warm him with.
[*During these words, he takes the baby back into the stalls.*

MARY (*standing lonely but radiant*)

Now Joseph, my husband, fetch hither my child, —
The Maker of men and high King of bliss!

JOSEPH (*returning*)

That shall be done anon, Mary so mild,
For the breathing of these beasts hath warm'd well, I wis.

[*He gives back the child. They make a typical "Holy Family" picture.*

From behind the right wing, haloed with the small spot-light, enter Gabriel to the Shepherds, spreading his hands over them in benediction.

GABRIEL (*chanting more and more thrillingly*)

Herdmen hind, dread ye no-thing
Of this star that ye do see;
For this same morn God's Son is born
In Bethlehem of a maiden free!

[*The Angel withdraws as he had come. The Shepherds slowly raise their heads. The First timidly gets to his feet, approaches, and worships the Babe, — kneeling before it.*

FIRST SHEPHERD

Hail, maid-mother, and wife so mild!
As the Angel said, so have we found.
I have no thing to present to thy child
But my pipe; hold, take it in thy hand —
(*He tries to give it to the baby. Joseph takes it*)
Wherein much pleasure that I have found;
And now to honor thy glorious birth
Thou shalt it have to make thee mirth.

[*He rises with an obeisance, moves to one side and again kneels, in profile, synchronously with the Second Shepherd.*

SECOND SHEPHERD (*going up and kneeling likewise*)
Now hail be thou, child, and thy dame!
For in a poor lodging here thou art laid!
So the Angel said, and told us thy name.
Hold, take thou here my hat on thy head.
(*He tries to put it on the baby, and Joseph takes it*)
And now of one thing thou art well sped: —
For weather thou hast no need to complain —
For wind nor sun, hail, snow and rain.
[*He rises like the First, and kneels in profile on the other side.*

THIRD SHEPHERD (*going up enthusiastically*)
Hail be thou, Lord over water and lands!
(*Kneeling, front*)
For thy coming, all we may make mirth.
Have here my mittens to put on thy hands,
(*Joseph takes these also*)
Other treasure have I none to present thee with.
[*He bows his head, with the other two.*

MARY (*very sweetly but as with authority too*)
Now, herdmen hind,
For your com-ing
To my child shall I pray
As He is Heaven's King
To grant you His blessing,
And to His bliss that ye may wend
At your last day.
[*The picture is held for a moment: then the curtains close on it. The spot-light reappears, on Isaiah.*

ISAIAH
This other night so cold,
Hereby upon a wold,
Shepherds watching their fold

In the night so far, —
To them appear'd a star,
And ever it drew them near,
Which star they did behold
Brighter, they say, a thousand-fold
Than the sun so clear
In his mid-day sphere, —
And they these tidings told.

[*From the midst of the audience a strong voice, either man's or woman's, suddenly calls.*

INTERLOCUTOR

What, secretly?

ISAIAH

Nay, nay, hard-ly;
They made thereof no coun-sel;
For they sung as loud
As ever they cou'd,
Praising the King of Israel.

INTERLOCUTOR

Yet do I mar-vel
In what pile or cas-tel
These herdmen did Him see.

ISAIAH

Neither in halls nor yet in bowers
Born would He not be;
Neither in castles nor yet in towers
That seemly were to see;
But at His Father's will,
The prophecy to fulfill,
Betwixt an ox and an ass
Jesu, this King, born He was:
Heaven He bring us till!

To recount unto you mine innumerable sub-stance, —
That were too much for any tongue to tell;
For all the whole Orient is under mine obedience,
And prince am I of Purgatory and chief captain of Hell;
(*swinging suddenly upon his quailing soldiers*)
And those tyrannous traitors by force may I compel
Mine enemies to vanquish and even to dust them drive;
And at a twink of mine eye not one to be left alive.

And therefore, my herald here, callëd Calchas,
Warn thou every port that no shippës arrive,
Nor also alien stranger through my realm pass,
But they for their truage do pay markës five!
Now speed thee forth hastily, —
And they that will thee contrary
Upon a gallows hang'd shall be,
And by Mahound of me they shall get no grace!

NUNTIUS

Now, lord and master, in all the haste,
Thy worthy will it shall be wrought,
And thy royal countries shall be pass'd
In as short time as can be thought!
[*Spoken with continuous bowing and scraping, faster and faster, ending with a rush of words and of feet as he dashes away up the right stair or perhaps out through the audience.*

HEROD (*pompously*)

Now shall our regions throughout be sought
In every place, both east and west.
If any caitiffs to me be brought —

It shall be *nothing* for their *best!*
And, the while that I do rest,
(*striding toward his throne*)
Trumpets, viols, and other harmony
Shall bless the waking of our majesty!

[*With a sign to the nearest soldier, who with all the others frantically repeats it until the musicians, off left, begin to play sleepy oriental music, Herod sits in his throne, his plumed head nods, he falls asleep; and the Star glows softly out once more, above.*

The King of Araby appears at one of the auditorium doors, holding a little wooden hobbyhorse between his legs, stuck into his purple robe. The music becomes pianissimo. He rides in sedately, reaches the front steps, carefully dismounts, and lays the horse down on the floor. The music ends. The King, raising a solemn hand to the Star, speaks, deeply, religiously.

KING BALTHASAR

Now blessëd be God of His sweet Son,
For yonder a fair bright star I do see;
Now is He comen us among,
As the prophet said that it should be.
Reverence and worship to Him will I do
As God and man, that all made of nought.
All the prophets accorded and said even so:
That with His precious blood mankind should be bought.
He grant me grace
By yonder Star that I see,
And into that place
Bring me,
That I may Him worship with humility,
And see His glorious face!

[*He kneels, erect but with bowed head, at one side of the steps.*

The King of Taurus enters from another auditorium door, with the same business.

KING JASPER (*pausing a little way from the front steps and looking about*)

Out of my way I deem that I am,
For tokens of this country can I none see;
Now God that on earth madest man,
Send me some knowledge where that I be!
Yonder, methink, a fair bright star I see,
The which betokeneth the birth of a child
That hither is come to make man free —
He born of a maid and she nothing defiled.
To worship that Child is my intent,
(*he spies the kneeling King*)
And I trust some company God hath me sent.
(*He rides up to King Balthasar, who rises when addressed*)
Hark, comely King! I you pray,
Whither liës your jour-ney?

KING BALTHASAR (*with a sweeping gesture*)

By yonder Star here may you see.

KING JASPER

Sir, I pray you, with your li-cense
To ride with you into His pre-sence;
To him will I offer frankincense,
For the head of all Holy Church shall He be.

[*He dismounts, and kneels, center, — the other King kneeling again too.*

Now through a third, if possible, auditorium door rides the King of Aginar. He stops in the aisle, half-way down, speaking in rich, African tones.

KING MELCHIOR

I ride wandering in ways wide
Over mountains and dales! Now, send me some guide,
King of all kingës! — Ah! Yonder all afar
I see a sight, the which, as I trow,
Betokens some news: a child 'pearing in a star!
I trust He be come that shall defend us from woe!
And two Kings yonder I see,
And to them will I ride,
Forto have their company;
(*then, with the only reference to his color*)
I trust they will me abide.
(*He rides up to them. They stand when addressed*)
Hail, comely Kings augent! [1]
Good sirs, I pray you, whither are ye meant?

KING BALTHASAR

To seek a Child is our intent,
Which betokens yon Star, as ye may see.

KING JASPER

To Him I purpose this pre-sent.

KING MELCHIOR

Sirs, I pray you, and that right humbly,
With you that I may ride in company.
[*He dismounts.*

ALL THREE KINGS (*lifting hands to the Star, fervently*)

To Almighty God now pray we
That His precious person we may see!
[*And they kneel, low on the steps, not so bent as the Shepherds were, but still out of the sight-lines.*

[1] Nobody knows what "augent" means, but it sounds good, and it rhymes.

The Nuntius bounds on again, down the left stair or else, with signs of astonishment, through the audience, past the Kings; and at the noise of his bells Herod awakes, starts up, and stands before his throne, down left.

The Star fades out.

NUNTIUS (*bowing and scraping as before*)

Hail, Lord most of might!
Thy commandment is right.
Into thy land is come this night
Three Kings, and with them a great company!

[*With a gesture embracing the Kings and the whole audience.*

HEROD (*disagreeably surprised*)

What make those Kings in this coun-try?

NUNTIUS (*falteringly*)

To seek a King
(*Herod is seized with rage. The Nuntius mollifies him with*) and a Child, they say.

HEROD

Now in pain of death bring them me beforne!
Look thou bring them all three before my sight!
(*Craftily*)
And in Jerusalem inquire more of that Child.
But I warn thee that thy words be mild,
For there must thou heed, and no craft scorn
To fordo His power; and those Kings shall be beguiled!

NUNTIUS (*gamboling and "tumbling"*)

Lord, I am ready, at your bid-ding,
To serve thee as my Lord and King;
For joy thereof, lo! how I spring

With light heart and fresh gamboling
  Aloft here on this mold!

HEROD

Then speed thee forth hastily,
And look thou bear thee evenly,
And also I pray thee heartily
That thou do commend me
  Both to young and old!

[*With a final scrape and flourish, the Nuntius twinkles to the three kneeling Kings, taps each lightly on the head with his bauble, and when they have severally arisen at this summons, waves them to the right side of the steps. When they stand grouped there, he, in the center, points out to them Herod opposite them.*

NUNTIUS

Hail, sir Kings, in your degree!
  Herod, King of these countries wide,
Desireth to speak with you all three,
  And for your coming he doth abide.

[*So the Kings move across, the First foremost and uppermost, the Third last and lowest on the steps, and the Nuntius takes stage to the right.*

HEROD (*as graciously as he can, holding his sword concealed behind him*)

Sir Kingës, as I understand,
A Star hath guided you into my land,
Wherein great hearting ye have found
  By reason of her beamës bright.
Wherefore I pray you heartily
The very truth that ye would certify
How long it is sure-ly
  Sin' of that star you had first sight.

KING BALTHASAR

Sir King, the very truth to say,
This same is even the twelfth day
Sith it appeared to us the west way.

HEROD (*wickedly smiling and bowing*)

Brother, then is there no more to say,
But, with heart and will, keep ye your jour-ney, —
And come home by me this same way
(*with insinuating courtesy*)
Of your news that I might *know!*
(*The sword he grips behind him begins to quiver, and presently it is jerking up and down as though he were itching to smite off their heads and then the "Child's", while evermore his voice sweetens seductively*)
You shall tri-úmph in this coun-try,
And with great concord banquet with me, —
And that child myself then will I *see,*
(*with a vicious flick of the sword*)
And honor him al-so.

KING JASPER

Sir, your commandment we will fulfill,
And humbly abay ourself thereto.
He that wieldeth all thing at will
The ready way us show,
Sir King, that we may pass your land in peace!

HEROD (*wickedly civil*)

Yes, and walk softly, even at your own ease! . . .

KING MELCHIOR

Now farewell, King of high degree!
Humbly of you our leave we take.

HEROD

Then adieu, Sir Kings, all three;
And while I live, be bold of me!

There is no-thing in this coun-try
But for your own ye shall it take.
(*The Kings turn around and move to the other side of the steps, where they stand in a close group, backs to audience, while attention remains fixed on Herod. Herod strides from before his throne across to the platform proper, his soldiers crowding and cowering back, and addresses the audience, pointing with his sword at the Kings*)
Now these three Kings are gone on their way.
Unwisely and unwittily have they wrought!
When they come again, they shall *die* that same day,
And thus these vile wretches to death shall be brought!
Such is my lik-ing (*with a lickerish prolongation of the words, as though tasting his autocracy*).
(*He ascends the left stair, pausing halfway up, and leaning over to peer at the Kings, and glare at the audience: not too loud, but ferociously*)
He that against my laws will hold,
Be he King or Kaiser never so bold, —
I shall them cast into carës cold
And to *death* I shall them bring!
[*He passes out, left, — his soldiers unobtrusively after him. The Nuntius starts to follow, but spies the empty throne and tiptoes across to it and very cautiously lets himself down in it, pluming himself delightedly.*
Now as the Kings separate, the First moving toward the left and the Second to center, the Star gradually appears once more, and the curtains very slowly part on the "Holy Family" picture dim in the deep background.

KING BALTHASAR (*as he moves slowly*)
O blessëd God, much is Thy might!
Where is this Star that gave us light?
KING JASPER (*dominating, at center*)
Now kneel we down here in this pre-sence,
Beseeching that Lord of high magnifi-cence
That we may see His high excellence,
If that be His sweet will and grace.
[*He and King Balthasar kneel. King Melchior, right, suddenly points.*
KING MELCHIOR
Yonder, brother, I see the Star,
Whereby I know He is not far;
Therefore, Lordës, go we near,
Into this poor place.
[*The Holy Family comes slowly down-stage. Then the First King rises, goes up, and kneels before Mary and the Child.*
KING BALTHASAR (*speaking as he slowly goes up*)
Hail, Lord that all this world hath wrought!
Hail, Thou that hast made all thing of nought! —
Albeit that Thou liest poorly here.
(*Kneeling*)
A cupful of gold here I have Thee brought
In tokening Thou art without peer.
[*He rises statelily, giving Joseph his gift, and goes to the right.*
KING JASPER (*coming up likewise ceremonially*)
Hail be Thou, Lord of high magnificence!
In tokening of priesthood's dignity of office,
(*kneeling, center*)
To Thee I offer a cup full of in-cense, —
(*giving it to Joseph, left*)

For it behooveth Thee to have such sacrifice.

[*He too rises and goes right, as King Melchior ascends and kneels.*

KING MELCHIOR

Hail be Thou, Lord long lookéd for!
I have brought Thee myrrh for mortality,
In tokening Thou shalt mankind restore
To life by Thy death upon a tree.

[*He kneels. Joseph takes the myrrh. He rises, shaken with feeling.*

MARY (*center, to the three Kings on the right*)

God have mercy, Kingës, of your good-ness;
By the guiding of the Godhead hither are ye sent;
The provision of my sweet Son your ways home redress,
And ghostily reward you for your pre-sent!

[*And as the Kings back away, through the proscenium, the curtains close again — and the scene is changed behind them.*

The three Kings are all weary and relaxed after an intense nervous strain: they step down the forestage reluctantly, as the Star fades out.

KING BALTHASAR

Sir Kingës, after our pro-mise,
Home by Herod I must needs go.

KING JASPER

Now, truly, brother, we can no less, —
But I am so for-watched, I wot not what to do!

KING MELCHIOR

Right so am I! Wherefore I you pray
Let us rest us a while upon this ground.

KING BALTHASAR

Brother, your saying is right well unto my say.[1]
The grace of that sweet Child save us all sound!

[*He sits against the right wing: his head bows: he sleeps.*

King Jasper sits one step down, lays his head on his arm, and sleeps.

King Melchior, draping his white cloak over himself, lies along the bottom step and sleeps likewise. And Gabriel appears from behind the right wing, even as he had to the Shepherds, and stands above them with benediction.

GABRIEL

King of Taurus, Sir Jas-par!
King of Araby, Sir Balthasar!
Melchior, King of Aginar!
To you now am I sent.
For dread of Herod, go you *west* home;
Into those parts when ye come down
Ye shall be buried with great renown;
The Holy Ghost this knowledge hath sent.

[*And he backs away through the curtains, center, the Kings begin to stir.*

KING BALTHASAR (*raising his head*)

Awake, Sir Kings, I you pray,
For the voice of an Angel I heard in my dream.

KING JASPER (*sitting up*)

That is full true that ye do say,
For he rehearséd our namës plain.

KING MELCHIOR (*standing, warmly awake, at the bottom of the steps*)

[1] In the original the last word is *pay*, paix, peace; but it would be misunderstood in the hearing, and "say" makes sense.

He bade that we should go down by west,
For dread of Herodē's false betray.

KING BALTHASAR (*standing up*)

So forto do, it is the best.
The Child that we have sought, guide us the way!

[*He and King Jasper descend to the floor; and all three mount their hobbyhorses that still lie there.*

KING JASPER (*center, facing front*)

Now sith that we must needly go
For dread of Herod that is so wroth,
Now farewell, brother, and brother al-so, —
I take my leave here of you both.

KING MELCHIOR (*right*)

Now farewell, Sir Jasper, brother, to you, —
King of Taurus the most wor-thy.
Sir Balthasar, also to you I bow,
And I thank you both for our good company
That we together have had.
He that made us to meet on hill,
I thank Him now, and ever I will;
For now may we go without ill,
And of our offering be full glad.

KING BALTHASAR (*left; ceremoniously*)

Now He that made us to meet on plain,
He give us grace in Heaven again
All together to meet!

[*And they ride away by separate doors through the audience, as they had come.*

Meanwhile the Nuntius, at first a mere "balance" for Isaiah, fantastically acting in Herod's throne, has become interested and watched the play. He was immensely impressed by the Angel. Now, hearing Herod

reëntering down the left stair, he slips quietly from the throne and slinks across to the right, — there facing Herod as he appears, his soldiers shrinking behind him as before. He bows very low, and speaks very fulsomely but without the spirit and springiness of his former speeches.

NUNTIUS

Hail, King, most worthiest in weed!
Hail, maintainer of courtesy through all this world wide!
Hail, the most mightiest that ever bestrode a steed!
Hail, most manfullest man in armor man to abide!
Hail, in thine ho-nor!
These three Kings that forth were sent
And should have come again before thee here pre-sent, —
Another way, Lord, home they went,
Contrary to thine ho-nor!

HEROD (*instantly flying into a terrific fury*)

Another way? — Out! Out!! OUT!!!
Have these false traitors done me this deed?
I stamp! I stare!! I look all about!!!
Might I them take I should them burn at a glede!
I rant! I rave! And now run I wide too!
(*Wherewith he plunges down the steps, brandishing his sword in the faces of the front row — the old stage direction runs "Here Erode ragis in the pagond & in the strete also" — and bounds again to the platform*)
They shall be hang'd if I may come them to!
Eh! and that kern of Bethlem, he shall be dead!
(*Whirls on his soldiers*)
How say you, Sir knights? Is not this the best rede,

That *all* young childer for this should be dead?
With sword to be slain?
(*They recoil more than ever*)
Whereto should *ye* be full fain!
[*With a terrible sneer.*

FIRST SOLDIER
My Lord King, — Herod by name, —
(*trembling violently*)
Thy words — against — my will shall be!
To see so many young childer die is shame,
And therefore counsel thereto gettest thou none from me!

SECOND SOLDIER (*against whom the First has crowded, backing him up, though shaking with terror*)
Well said, fellow; my troth I plight;
Sir King, perceive right well you may
So great a murder to see of young fruit
Will make a rising in thine own coun-try!

[*All on one breath — his voice rising to a fearful squeal, and the two spears — perhaps half an inch thick and twelve feet high — wavering frantically as Herod "rages" again.*

HEROD
A rising? — Out! Out!! OUT!!!
Out, villain wretches, here upon you I cry!
My will utterly look that it be wrought!
Or upon a gallows both you shall die,
By Mahound most mightiest that me dear hath bought!
(*Driving them up the stair*)
Now, look you, forth that ye go,
And my will that ye work both by day and night!

(*They disappear, fleeing before him. He comes down again, savagely*)

For then will I for fain trip like a doe!

(*Yelling after them, shaking his sword*)

But when they be dead, I warn you, bring them before my sight!

[*And he strides across and sits in his throne, gnawing his nails.*

The curtains part once more, revealing Joseph and Mary asleep on the floor with the Child between them, and Gabriel against a heavenly background with arms high spread above them.

GABRIEL

Mary and Joseph, to you I say
Sweet word from the Father I bring you full right:
Out of Bethlem into Egypt forth go ye the way,
And with you take the King full of might,
For dread of Herod's rede!

[*Joseph awakes and starts up.*

JOSEPH

Arise up, Mary, hastily and soon;
Our Lord's will needs must be done
Like as the Angel us bade.

[*Mary gets up and lifts the Child, wrapping Him in her blue cloak.*

MARY

Meekly, Joseph, mine own spouse,
Toward that country let us repair.
At Egypt some token of house —
God grant us grace safe to come there!

[*The curtains close behind them as they go up the right stair, away from Herod and the soldiers, — passing, so, the Nuntius, who at this second vision of*

Gabriel is quite converted and kneels, crossing himself, as the Child passes him. When they are gone he rises and cautiously approaches Herod, speaking humbly but firmly and sincerely.

NUNTIUS

Herod, King, I shall thee tell
All thy deeds are come to nought:
This child is gone into Egypt to dwell.
Lo, Sir, in thine own land, what wonders been wrought!

HEROD (*starting up in despair*)

Into Egypt? Alas, for woe!
Longer in land here *I* cannot abide!
Saddle my palfrey, for in haste will I go:
After yonder traitors now will I ride
Them forto sloe (slay)!

(*He jumps to the platform and bounds up the stair, "galloping" — the Nuntius purposely pointing him a direction opposite that taken by the Child; or he gallops out through the audience, the Nuntius likewise showing him that — wrong — way*)

Now all men hie fast
Into Egypt in haste!
All that country will I taste
Till I may come them to!
[*He disappears, yelling.*

The spot-light returns to Isaiah, who raises his hand as at the beginning.

ISAIAH

More of this matter fain would I move,
But longer time have I not here forto dwell.
That Lord that is merciful, his mercy so in us prove

Forto save our souls from the darkness of Hell!
And to His bliss He us bring
As He is both Lord and King
And shall be everlasting —
In saecula saeculorum, Amen!

[*With a benediction, he turns and paces back through the curtains, the Nuntius again kneeling and crossing himself as he passes. When he is gone, the house-lights come on, and the Nuntius, springing up, trips down into the audience to collect their charitable pennies in his wallet; and the Play is over.*

DOCTOR FAUSTUS

By Christopher Marlowe

Produced by Sam Hume
at the
Arts and Crafts Theatre, Detroit
in January, 1918

INTRODUCTION

"THE Tragical History of Doctor Faustus" is approximately to be dated 1590, — perhaps a year or two earlier. It is founded on the "Faustbuch" of Johann Spiess, first printed at Frankfort in 1587, and immediately translated into English as "The History of Doctor Faustus", of which a reprint is known to have been issued in 1592.

The historical Doctor Faustus, a native of Württemberg, is first heard of in 1520, visited Auerbach's Cellar in Leipzig in 1525, twice escaped from prison (once in Wittenberg), practiced magic in Germany and Italy, and in 1562 is said to have come to his end "a few years ago, being found in the morning dead in his bed with his face twisted" — "so the Devil had killed him." Luther cursorily, and Melanchthon more fully, mention him, and the latter's pupil, Lercheimer, writes much of him in a work on magic published in 1585 — notably of an attempt to convert him made by an old, pious man.

That Marlowe found the story fascinating dramatic material is in accord with his character, or what little we know about it. Marlowe was born at Canterbury, in the same year as Shakespeare, and of the same tradesman class; but he received good schooling, and proceeded to Cambridge, receiving his B.A. there in 1584 and his M.A. in 1587 — the year in which Shakespeare probably broke away from Stratford and began

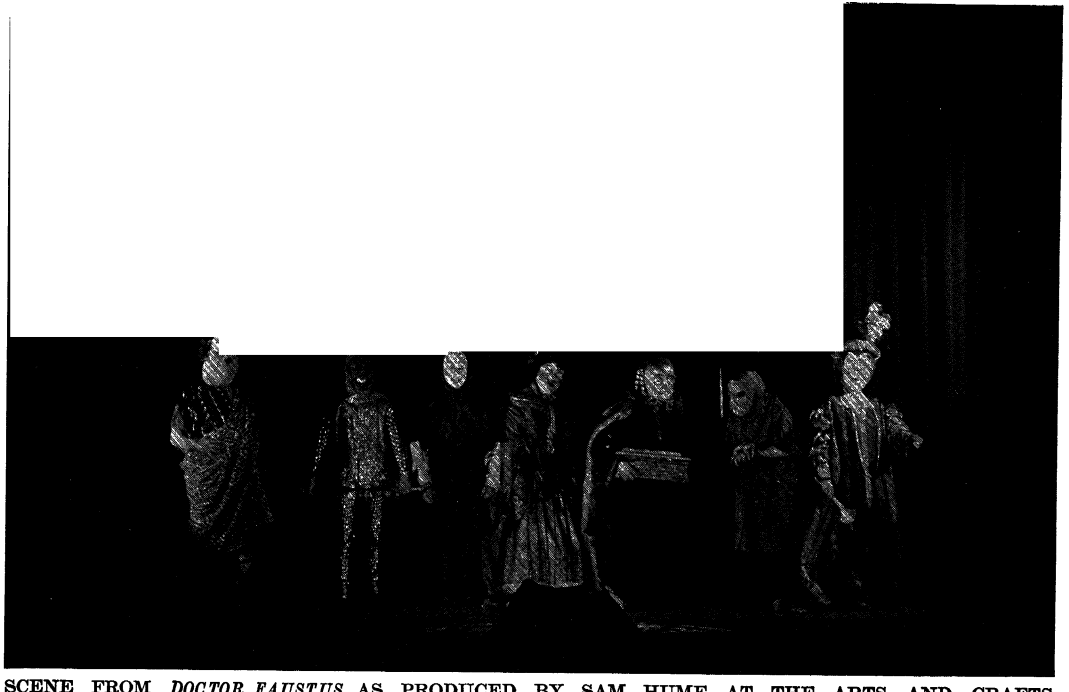
his career in London. Marlowe, with his more precocious genius and his educational advantages, had the good fortune to make a hit as a playwright at first trial, — his tremendous *Tamburlaine the Great* sweeping all London off its feet; while Shakespeare had laboriously to work his way into the theaters, become an actor, then a reviser of outworn play-books, then a collaborator with Marlowe in rewriting the chronicles of King Henry VI, an imitator of his dramaturgy in *King Richard III* and *King Richard II* and of his narrative poetry in *Venus and Adonis*, and only by much practice and experiment in the actual theater a successful playwright in his own right at last. Marlowe was untimely killed in a tavern brawl at Deptford in 1593, — soon after completing *King Edward II*, his most objective play and the best drama till then written in English. He had collaborated in other chronicle-plays to an extent unknown; and with Thomas Nash he had made a play out of the "Aeneid" — *The Tragedy of Dido*. His *Jew of Malta* was either written in collaboration also, or more likely recklessly hurried onto the stage; and his *Massacre at Paris* was similarly an "occasional" piece, almost immediately contemporaneous with the St. Bartholomew Massacre it began with and the assassination of Henri III it closed on: a tumult of violent events.

But *Doctor Faustus*, written probably immediately after *Tamburlaine* and showing the same youthful ardor, combined with a growing sense of the theater, — its variety and possible subtlety, and the range and art of the great actor Alleyn, — was essentially the truest subjective expression of Marlowe: his university experience, his love of classical and occult

learning, his keen intellectualism, his religious doubts and originality, and his Elizabethan passion for luxury and power and beauty. Using the superstitions of the age, the drolleries of the Faust-book, the popular antipopery and love of spectacle and vulgar clowning, he yet contrived to work into his play a universal idea, a superhuman conflict, a tragic utterance in Faustus's last agony that still curdles the listener's blood, and an apostrophe to Helen of Troy that can perish only with our language. His poetry, by the way, while all in all more modernly, directly, phrased than Shakespeare's, requires for the unacquainted reader's enjoyment his remembrance that blank verse was new when this play was penned, — *Tamburlaine* indeed was the work which first established it as *the* form for our dramatic poetry, — and his acceptance of the heavy regular beat of most of the play's verse as a naïve beauty, not a blemish. The actor, too, must take care to pronounce each line as a metrical unit, with unsophisticated delight in its sheer rhythm and sonorousness. The play is in more than one such way a link in dramatic evolution. It connects with the Moralities before it, in theme, and in details like the show of the Seven Deadly Sins, and with the tragedies that followed it, like *Hamlet* and *Lear* and *Macbeth*, in the fractional and rough-hewn but searching and vivid characterization of the hero, the uplift of the poetry, and the purging sweep of the catastrophe.

Our version, a quarto of 1604, is probably very unlike the play as Marlowe left it. Where certain of Shakespeare's plays, as *Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth*, have suffered manifest cutting, and even interpola-

tion, in the long interval between their composition and their first publication, *Doctor Faustus* was plainly mangled, in its ten years' life in the theaters after its author's death, so drastically that Marlowe's best passages only gush up here and there like refreshing springs in a morass. After Alleyn's death, the play was probably adapted to the capacities of some lesser "star", and all its less effective scenes elided, — the skeleton being then fleshed out with popular farce-stuff meant to be further "ad lib.'d" by the clowning performers. This Elizabethan adaptation has made the modern adapter's task exceedingly difficult, for when the fustian was sheared out, not enough matter remained from which to choose and piece a rounded play. The techniqueless sprawl of that adaptation which must be our original, with its stray scenes or passages of drama and beauty so woefully disjointed and dispersed, is irremediable: nothing can prevent a modern performance from seeming abrupt and fragmentary. In the following version great liberties have been taken in transposing lines, but nothing save a few *and*'s and *he*'s has been added. The parts printed in smaller type are such as can be omitted if a brief, concentrated performance is desired, or wholly or partially retained if a fuller, fairer, pictorial production of Marlowe's already mutilated work is wished.



SCENE FROM *DOCTOR FAUSTUS* AS PRODUCED BY SAM HUME AT THE ARTS AND CRAFTS THEATRE, DETROIT, IN JANUARY, 1918

The Seven Deadly Sins — Gluttony, Wrath, Sloth, Lechery, Covetousness, Envy, and Pride — in original costumes and masks

CHARACTERS

CHORUS,* a tall man with a musical voice and a rather ecclesiastical appearance, in a gown of dark gray edged with black velvet and a wreath of gold laurel about his head, perhaps carrying a golden palm.

FAUSTUS,* an academic "doctor", in the prime of life, vibrant and vocal with emotion under his loose, heavy, black gown, crimson-trimmed, with a crimson-lined "hood" which he pulls up for a hat when supposedly outdoors. Preferably a rather small man physically, easily cowed, but full of compensating, soaring dreams! His oscillating feelings flood forth readily in words: his voice, — rich, flexible, resonant, passionate, — must be his chief medium.

WAGNER, his "famulus": a very slim, flaxen-haired lad in his middle 'teens, clad in straight, conventional, blue and black garments of the fifteenth rather than the sixteenth century, stiff (military) of bearing and gait, angular of gesture, whimsical and pert of speech.

VALDES, a young wizard in black and purple, with a high peaked hat patterned with cabalistic signs. A weird face and glittering eye and a strange-timbred voice would impart interest to him.

CORNELIUS, a somber-robed astrologer, with a very long gray beard and huge grizzled brows, and a

flat cloth hat with sides falling over his nape and ears. He should carry some astrologer's instrument, and speak with a very bass voice.

THREE SCHOLARS,* all more or less alike, typical academics of the time, sober in appearance but on fire with new-won classical learning, enthusiastic, quite young.

A DOCTOR OF DIVINITY, an old man in black with white hair and beard, and a silver chain and crucifix about his neck.

THE CLOWN, a short, fat, sturdy rogue, dressed in dingy tatters and rents, bristly-faced, red-nosed, — true to type.

THE GOOD ANGEL,* a man, in white, with a sweet, penetrating voice and yellow hair. He stands still throughout.

THE EVIL ANGEL,* a man in flaming orange with a harsh, hoarse voice, an artificially misshapen head with orange hair, and a natural or artificial extra-long forearm and knotty hand like a claw. A complete mask with big savage eyes might help him, too.

MEPHISTOPHILIS,* at first a very tall, thin, black Devil, with immensely elongated arms and claws, a terrifying mask with horns and fiery eyes that glow and glare, a stilted, uncanny walk, a stature overtopping Faustus; then, a little gray Friar, no bigger than Faustus, mild-faced and gentle-spoken but aquiline and incisive; and then, in the Emperor's Court and thereafter, unless only the shortest version is given, a lean, discreet Scholar in black and

gray, with a dagger at his belt. At the play's end he resumes for an instant the fiend-guise of his first appearance. He is above all an *actor*, with a wide variety, a latent dominance, a suggestion of unhuman depth, and, withal, a complete command of his histrionic means, and instinctive theatrical sense.

LUCIFER,* a gigantic man with a deep roaring voice to match his size, — gleaming black all over, tightly clothed in pointed, ribbed scales of glittering black, covering even his hands; with a mask of the same, bull-horned, yet further lowering and trumpeting his voice, and with little artificial eyes like glowing embers. An overpowering figure!

Two IMPS,* little boys in blood-red skin tights, with short tails, a suggestion of hoofs, and grinning dog masks.

SHAPES: [ALEXANDER THE GREAT, closely imitated from the extant vase paintings of him;
his PARAMOUR, a Persian beauty of his time;]
HELEN OF TROY,* in smooth black velvet, absolutely unbroken, unadorned, quite merging with the black curtain when she stands against the latter, and throwing into the greater prominence her motionless arms, her swanlike neck, her fair hair crowned with pearls above her silver brow. A Greek profile is essential, and a majestic gait, and perfect arms. She is mute.

[THE POPE, any sixteenth-century pope.

THE CARDINAL OF LORRAINE, in cardinal robes and cap.

ATTENDANT FRIARS, both Black and Gray,

THE EMPEROR, CHARLES V, imperially robed and crowned, in the most florid sixteenth-century style.

THE EMPRESS, likewise.

A KNIGHT AT THE COURT, very much dressed up.

COURT ATTENDANTS, three or four, in the background, more subdued.]

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS,* who will be described in the text at their appearance.

* NOTE: The names above starred are those of the characters that are essential to the *short* version of the play, the other names being of characters who appear only in the doubtful scenes printed in smaller type in the ensuing text. Those inclosed in brackets appear only in the two bracketed scenes, pages 153 to 161, which would be omitted from most Little Theater productions.

THE CAST OF THE PLAY AT ITS ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

CHORUS	Winniett Wright
FAUSTUS	Carl Guske
THE GOOD ANGEL	C. E. Grady
THE EVIL ANGEL	G. W. Smith
MEPHISTOPHILIS:	
At his First appearance	Phillips Campbell
Later in the Play	Frederic McConnell
LUCIFER	Robert M. Toms
HELEN OF TROY	V. Frances Clark
FIRST SCHOLAR	Chester E. Grady
SECOND SCHOLAR	Clarence Hunter
THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS	C. J. Lingemann Philip Rosenthal Kitsey B. Clark Clarence Hunter George Spelvin F. H. Dame Roxa Plotler
THE TWO IMPS	Herbert Bolster Max Lamport

DOCTOR FAUSTUS

THE SCENE. *Before contemplating the actual scene, there are certain considerations to be advanced in explanation of its original features.*

Imagine a dramatic poem, the Time and Place of which matter not a whit: a version in everlasting verse of an eternal spiritual problem. Realism is out of place — would ruin the dignity and beauty of the drama. The picture stage of modern theaters is out of place — can only swaddle and conceal the naked poetry on which all else depends. Imagine a production, then, beyond realism, outside of the picture stage (which means, of course, in front of it), and devoted wholly to this poetry. Such a production must be "stylized" down to the smallest details, — rigid, formal, conventional in every inch and moment of external things, — to liberate the more the pure thought and word that is its cause and end. Monotony, on the other hand, is not needful, nor inflexible light, nor flatness of design, nor any other flagrant abandonment of drama, — activity, — for the alien rules of plastic or pictorial arts. Let us not constrict ourselves in the confines of the Munich Relief-stage, however indebted we confess ourselves to the silhouette principle, and the strong projection of actor and speech resulting from it, which the Künstlertheater has promulgated.

Marlowe's "Doctor Faustus" is a poem of the insatiable lust of man, and particularly of Renaissance man and Marlowe in his own person, after experience

and power. It is presented as a tragedy, because that lust, in accordance with Christian ethics, is conceived to be devilish. It is simply and truly Elizabethan, with alternating serious and comic scenes, poetry and prose, front and rear action. But reconstructions within a modern theater building of the Elizabethan stage cannot but be imperfect: the three-sided plasticity of its action, it is impossible to reproduce in modern auditoriums. Some kind of substitute must be employed, with a separate, projecting fore-stage and actors on it moving in relief against deep, simple, but poetic, "atmospheric" backgrounds.

Therefore in front of the orchestra pit of an ordinary medium-sized theater, or an artificial pit before the stage of a Little Theater, imagine that a platform is constructed spanning the whole width of the house, a few inches lower than the stage and connected with it by narrow "bridges", at each end, over the pit. The platform is about five feet wide, and covered with dull black. The pit itself is black, perhaps with upward streaks of painted flame. Behind the pit, a special black curtain, replacing the one ordinarily used, is provided at the upper bridge ends with rectangular openings leading into darkness, which remain open throughout the performance. From the front of the stage, before the center division of this curtain, a flight of steps, misty gray, descends into the black pit; and another flight or a ladder (a trap elevator would be ideal) rises thence, out of the audience's sight, to the back of the platform, a little to the right of center. There is also, to the right of the center stairs, a slight elevation for the Evil Angel to stand on, his head and arms alone above the stage floor. On the stage itself, disclosed and framed by the parting of the black curtain, is a little black room,—

its sides permanent, deeply framing the back-drop prospects in exteriors, but its rear wall varied — the only variable part of the scene in the whole production. By its simple shifts there are represented in the drama's course first Faustus's Study, with a deep, black starry sky behind it, then a Grove, and then, perhaps, the Emperor's Court.

For the Study, — the sole scene, by the way, of the shortest version, — the two rear corners of the set are made oblique: that to the right being the high, strait, Gothic entrance door, and that on the left the pedestal of the Good Angel with black gauze before it through which he appears and speaks whenever the light — little "strips" within the gauze — is thrown on him. The back wall is plain black, like the sides, but with an immense window in its upper half (above the actors' heads, that their silhouettes be not disturbed by the complex grating of the panes) through which a black sky looms, studded with some recognizable constellation like the Great Bear. A black table, with a black cloth quite concealing its legs, and covered with big black books, is set cornerwise with a chair behind (below) it facing upper right; and a nondescript low black box, upturned for a seat, and also hiding several "properties", is at center, at the head of the steps but within the curtain.

The lighting of this stage or scene — both before and behind the curtain — falls from above, and from the rear of the audience. There can be no footlights. High in the "tormentors" of the Study interior, two concentrated lights cast special illumination upon the desk, the Doctor sitting at it, and the books he one by one takes up, and upon the closed door at upper right just before and when it is opened for a new character's entrance.

When in sign of the play's beginning these top and front lights have replaced the ordinary auditorium lighting, Chorus slips through the curtain, center, and stands at the head of the steps.

CHORUS

Not marching now in fields of Thrasimene
Where Mars did mate the Carthaginians; —
Nor sporting in the dalliance of love, —
In courts of kings where state is overturned, —
Nor in the pomp of proud, audacious deeds, —
Intends our Muse to vaunt her heavenly verse.
To patient judgments we appeal our plaud,
And speak for Faustus, born in Germany.
To Wittenberg he went, of riper years,
Where shortly he was graced with Doctor's name,
Excelling all whose sweet delight disputes
In heavenly matters of theology, —
(*His voice alters, to severity*)
Till, swollen with cunning of a self-conceit,
His waxen wings did mount above his reach,
And, melting, Heavens conspired his overthrow:
For glutted now with learning's golden gifts
He surfeits upon curséd necromancy:
Nothing so sweet as magic is to him,
Which he prefers before his chiefest bliss!
And this the man that in his study sits.

[*Chorus deliberately descends into the pit.*

The curtain parts, discovering Faustus at his desk with an enormous book of magic propped open before him, displaying strange geometrical designs, which he tries not to look at, opening instead one tome after another which he presently pushes aside.

FAUSTUS

Settle thy studies, Faustus, and begin
To sound the depth of that thou wilt profess:
Having commenced, be a divine in show,
Yet level at the end of *every* art!
(*He opens a book*)
Sweet Analytics, 'tis thou hast ravished me.
(*Reads*)
"*Bene disserere est finis logices.*"
Is "to dispute well" logic's chiefest end?
Affords this art no greater miracle?
Then read no more: thou hast attained that end.
(*Shuts the book*)
A greater subject fitteth Faustus' wit:
Seeing, "*Ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus,*"
(*reaching for and opening another book*)
Be a physician, Faustus, heap up gold,
And be eternized for some wondrous cure!
(*Reads*)
"*Summum bonum medicinae sanitas.*"
"The end of physic is our body's health."
Why, Faustus, hast thou not attained *that* end?
Yet art thou still but Faustus, and a man.
Couldst thou make men to live eternally,
Or, being dead, raise them to life again,
Then this profession were to be esteemed!
Physic, farewell! — Where is Justinian?
(*Shutting the book and opening another; reads*)
"*Si una eademque res legatur duobus,*
Alter rem, alter valorem rei," *etcetera,* —
A pretty case of paltry legacies!
"*Exhaereditare filium non potest pater* — "
Such is the subject of the institute

And universal body of the law!
This study fits a mercenary drudge
Who aims at nothing but external trash, —
(*shuts the book decisively*)
Too servile and illiberal for me! (*Pauses*)
When all is done, divinity is best:
Jerome's Bible, Faustus! View it well!
(*Slowly opening it, he reads*)
"*Stipendium peccati mors est.*" Ha!
(*Repeats, balefully prolonging the last two words*)
"*Stipendium peccati mors est!*"
"The reward of sin is death!" That's hard.
(*Reads further*)
"*Si peccasse negamus, fallimur, et nulla est in nobis veritas.*"
"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,
And there's no truth in us." Why, then, belike
We *must* sin, and so consequently die!
Ay, we must die an everlasting death.
What doctrine call you this, *Che será, será* —
What will be, shall be? Divinity, adieu!
(*He puts the Bible aside. Pause. He contemplates the magic book before him. Softly*)
These metaphysics of magicians
And necromantic books are heavenly:
Lines, circles, scenes, letters, and characters —
Ay, these are those that Faustus most desires!
Oh, what a world of profit and delight,
Of power, of honor, of omnipotence,
Is promised to the studious artisan!
(*He becomes rapt and visionary, his voice thrilling and soaring*)
All things that move between the quiet poles

Shall be at my command! Emperors and kings
Are but obeyèd in their several provinces,
Nor can they raise the wind, or rend the clouds!
But his dominion that exceeds in *this*,
Stretcheth as far as doth the mind of man!
A sound magician is a mighty god!
Here, Faustus, tire thy brains to gain a deity!

(*Lost in his book, he does not hear the door open and Wagner enter, and walk stiffly and silently to him, carrying a big book which he lays down before him. Then, he looks up*)
Wagner, commend me to my dearest friends,
The German Valdes and Cornelius;
Request them earnestly to visit me.

WAGNER

I will, sir.

[*Mute, straight, and stiff, he goes out again.*

FAUSTUS

Their conference will be a greater help to me
Than all my labors, plod I ne'er so fast.

[*A soft light shines, increasing, upon the Good Angel, — vague through the shadowy gauze. Then the Evil Angel lifts his misshapen, fiery head from the pit, and lays his long left arm and claw over the edge of the stage. Faustus gives no sign of hearing either of them. They speak softly, the one musically, the other hoarsely:*

GOOD ANGEL

O Faustus, lay thy damnéd book aside,
And gaze not at it, lest it tempt thy soul
And heap God's heavy wrath upon thy head!
Read, read the Scriptures! That is blasphemy!

EVIL ANGEL

Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art
Wherein all Nature's treasure is contained:

Be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky —
Lord and commander of these elements!

[*The light fades: the Good Angel dissolves into blackness; and the Evil Angel sinks back into the pit. Faustus goes on gazing.*

FAUSTUS

How am I glutted with conceit of this!
Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please,
Perform what desperate enterprise I will, —
Resolve me of all ambiguities?
I'll have them fly to India for gold,
Ransack the o-ce-an for orient pearl,
And search all corners of the new-found world
For pleasant fruits and princely delicates!

I'll levy soldiers with the coin they bring,
And chase the Prince of Parma from our land,
And reign sole king of all the provinces, —
Yea, stranger engines for the brunt of war
Than was the fiery keel at Antwerp's bridge
I'll make my servile spirits to invent.
(*Through the door stalk Valdes and Cornelius. Faustus rises to greet them. They salute strangely, silently. Cornelius stands above the table, Valdes across it from Faustus*)
Come, German Valdes and Cornelius,
And make me blest with your sage conference!
(*Gives them his hands*)
Valdes, sweet Valdes, and Cornelius, —
Know that your words have won me, at the last, —
Yet not your words alone, but mine own fantasy —
That will receive no object; [1] for my head
But ruminates on necromantic skill!
'Tis magic, magic, that hath ravished me!
Then, gentle friends, aid me in this attempt.

[1] i.e., objection.

VALDES

Faustus, these books, thy wit, and our experience
Will make thee vow to study nothing else!

From Venice shall they drag huge argosies,
And from America the golden fleece
That yearly stuffs old Philip's treasury!
As Indian Moors obey their Spanish lords,
So shall the spirits of every element —
Sometimes like women or unwedded maids
Shadowing more beauty in their airy brows
Than have the white breasts of the queen of love —
Be always serviceable
to us three.
Like lions shall they guard us when we please,
Or Lapland giants, trotting by our sides, —
If learnéd Faustus will be resolute!

FAUSTUS

Valdes, as resolute am I in this
As thou to live: therefore object it not.

CORNELIUS

He that is grounded in astrology,
Enrich'd with tongues, well seen in minerals,
Hath all the principles magic doth require:
Then doubt not, Faustus, but to be renowned!
The spirits tell me they can dry the sea
And fetch the treasure of all foreign wrecks, —
Ay, all the wealth that our forefathers hid
Within the massy entrails of the earth:
Then tell me, Faustus, what shall we three want?

FAUSTUS

Nothing, Cornelius!
Oh, this cheers my soul! —
Come, show me some demonstrations magical,
That I may cónjure in some lusty grove
And have these joys in full possession!

[Here, for the short version, he rises and goes left along the apron, carrying the open book.

VALDES

Then haste thee to some solitary grove,
And bear wise Bacon's and Albertus' works,
The Hebrew Psalter, and New Testament;
And whatsoever else is requisite
We will inform thee ere our conference cease.

CORNELIUS

Valdes, first let him know the words of art,
And then, all other ceremonies learned,
Faustus may try his cunning by himself.

VALDES

First I'll instruct thee in the rudiments,
And then wilt thou be perfecter than I!

FAUSTUS

Then come and dine with me, and after meat
We'll canvass every quiddity thereof;
For ere I sleep I'll try what I can do:
This night I'll cónjure, though I die therefóre!

[He closes the great book of magic and lifts it preparatory to leaving, and the curtain closes before them.

By the left bridge two Scholars cross to the platform in conversation, and immediately after, Wagner skips down the right bridge with two tankards in his left hand and a third in his right, together with a tall pitcher which, when the Scholars accost him, he sets down with care in the center of the platform and talks across, vivaciously gesturing with the tankards, fleetly, in contrast to the measured verse of the foregoing scene, and with all the comic effect he can muster.

FIRST SCHOLAR

I wonder what's become of Faustus, that was wont to make our schools ring with "sic probo!"

SECOND SCHOLAR

That shall we know: for see, here comes his boy.

FIRST SCHOLAR

How now, sirrah! where's your master?

WAGNER (*setting down the pitcher*)
God in Heaven knows!

SECOND SCHOLAR
Why, dost not thou know?

WAGNER
Yes, I know; but that follows not.

FIRST SCHOLAR
Go to, sirrah! leave your jesting, and tell us where he is.

WAGNER
That follows not necessary by force of argument that you, being licentiate, should stand upon't! Therefore acknowledge your error, and be attentive.

SECOND SCHOLAR
Why, didst thou not say thou knewest?

WAGNER
Have you any witness on't?

FIRST SCHOLAR
Yes, sirrah, I heard you.

WAGNER
Ask my *fellow* if *I* be a thief!

SECOND SCHOLAR
Well, you will not tell us?

WAGNER
Yes, sir, I will tell you; yet if you were not dunces you would never ask me such a question, for is not he "corpus naturale" and is not that "mobile"? Then wherefore should you ask me such a question? But that I am by nature phlegmatic, slow to wrath, it were not for you to come within forty feet of the place of execution, although I do not doubt to see you both hanged the next sessions. Thus having triumphed over you, I will set my countenance like a precisian (*i.e.* — *a Puritan*), and begin to speak thus: Truly, my dear brethren, my master is within at dinner with Valdes and Cornelius, as this wine (*picking up the pitcher again*), if it could speak, it would inform your worships; and so, the Lord bless you, preserve you, and keep you, my dear brethren, my dear brethren!

[*Nodding to each, passing between them, he runs off, up the left bridge.*

FIRST SCHOLAR

Nay, then, I fear he has fallen into that damn'd art for which they two are infamous through the world!

SECOND SCHOLAR

Were he a stranger, and not allied to me, yet should I grieve for him. But come, let us go and inform the Rector, and see if he by his grave counsel can reclaim him.

FIRST SCHOLAR

Oh, but I fear me nothing can reclaim him!

SECOND SCHOLAR

Yet let us try what we can do.

[They go up the right bridge.

The curtain parts again, on a prospect of sunset sky,— red, gold, and gray, with silhouetted trees on either side,— deep back on the stage framed by the bare short side-walls of the study.

The right half of the platform is darkened to mystery, as Faustus advances down the left bridge and, preserving a strict profile pose against the [distant, slowly gloaming] background, "conjures", book in hand.

FAUSTUS

Now that the gloomy shadow of the earth,
Longing to view Orion's drizzling look,
Leaps from th' antarctic world unto the sky,
And dims the welkin with her pitchy breath, —
Faustus, begin thine incantations!

And try if Devils will obey thy hest,
Seeing thou hast prayed and sacrificed to them.

Within this circle is Jehovah's name
Forward and backward anagrammatised,
Th' abbreviated names of holy saints
And characters and signs of erring stars,
By which the spirits are enforced to rise!

Then fear not, Faustus, but be resolute,
And try the uttermost magic can perform.
(*Reads*)
"*Sint mihi Dei Acherontis propitii!*
Ignei, aërii, aquatani spiritus, salvete!
Orientis princeps Belzebub, inferni ardentis monarcha,
et Demogorgon, — propitiamus vos,
ut appareat et surgat Mephistophilis, quod tumeraris!
Per Jehovam, Gehennam, et consecratam aquam
quam nunc spargo,
signumque crucis quod nunc facio,
et per vota nostra, —
ipse nunc surgat nobis dicatus Mephistophilis!!"

(*By the ladder or trap just behind the platform a little to the right of center, i.e. just in front of Faustus, up-shoots with terrifying suddenness Mephistophilis in his first excessively tall thin guise, and stands stock-still, only the eyes of his mask glaring, his enormous arms hanging to his knees. Faustus, so overtopped and startled back in dismay, presently recovers*)
I charge thee to return, and change thy shape!
Thou art too ugly to attend on me.
Go, and return an old Franciscan friar:
That holy shape becomes a devil best.
(*Mephistophilis stalks uncannily and rapidly off up the right bridge*)
I see there's virtue in my heavenly words!
Who would not be proficient in this art?
How pliant is this Mephistophilis, —
Full of obedience and humility!
Such is the force of magic and my spells!

[*A little old gray Friar comes down the right bridge, — Mephistophilis having had only to doff his mask*

and claws and pull on the ample cowled gown, just within the curtain. The two stand facing each other about four feet apart, almost motionless but speaking with the utmost flexibility and beauty of voice.

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Now, Faustus, — what wouldst thou have me do?

FAUSTUS

I charge thee, wait upon me whilst I live,
To do whatever Faustus shall command,
Be it to make the moon drop from her sphere
Or th' o-ce-an to overwhelm the world!

MEPHISTOPHILIS

I am a servant to great Lucifer,
And may not follow thee without his leave;
No more than he commands must we perform.

FAUSTUS

Did not he charge thee to appear to me?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

No, I came hither of mine own accord.

FAUSTUS

Did not my cónjuring speeches raise thee? Speak!

MEPHISTOPHILIS

That was the cause, but yet *per accidens* —
For when we hear one rack the name of God,
Abjure the Scriptures, and his Savior Christ,
We fly, in hope, to get his glorious soul:
Nor will we come unless he use such means
Whereby he is in danger to be damn'd.

FAUSTUS

That word "damnation" terrifies him not,
For he confounds hell in Elysium:
His ghost be with the old philosophers!

But leaving these vain trifles of men's souls,
Tell me, what is that Lucifer thy lord?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Arch-regent and commander of all spirits.

FAUSTUS

Was not that Lucifer an Angel once?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Yes, Faustus, and most dearly loved of God.

FAUSTUS

How comes it, then, that he is prince of devils?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Oh, by aspiring pride and insolence,
For which God threw him from the face of heaven.

FAUSTUS

And what are you that live with Lucifer?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer,
Conspired against our God with Lucifer,
And are forever damn'd with Lucifer!

FAUSTUS

Where are you damn'd?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

In hell.

FAUSTUS

How comes it, then, that thou art out of hell?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it!
Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God,
And tasted the eternal joys of Heaven,
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells
In being deprived of everlasting bliss?
Oh, Faustus, leave these frivolous demands,
Which strike a terror to my fainting soul!

FAUSTUS

What, is great Mephistophilis so passionate
For being deprivéd of the joys of Heaven?
Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude,
And scorn those joys thou never shalt possess!
Go, bear these tidings to great Lucifer:
Seeing Faustus hath incur'd eternal death,
Say, he surrenders up to him his soul,
So he will spare him four-and-twenty years,
Letting him live in all voluptuousness, —
Having thee ever to attend on me,
To give me whatsoever I shall ask,
To tell me whatsoever I demand,
To slay mine enemies and aid my friends,
And always be obedient to my will, —

Go and return to mighty Lucifer,
And meet me in my study at midnight,

And then resolve me of thy master's mind.

MEPHISTOPHILIS

I will, Faustus.

[*And with sudden swiftness he descends into the pit even as he came.*

Faustus turns in the semi-darkness and paces sedately, though with exultant, soaring speech, toward the left bridge.

FAUSTUS

Had I as many souls as there be stars,
I'd give them all for Mephistophilis!
By him I'll be great emperor of the world,
And make a bridge thorough the moving air
To pass the ocean with a band of men!
I'll join the hills that bind the Afric shore

And make that country continent to Spain,
And both contributory to my crown!
The Emperor shall not live but by my leave,
Nor any potentate of Germany!
(*Pauses at the bridge*)
Now that I have obtained what I desired,
I'll live in speculation of this art
Till Mephistophilis return again.

[*He turns his back on the audience and returns to his study up the bridge.*

As soon as he has disappeared — the curtain meanwhile closing and the front lights brightening — Wagner enters down the right bridge, waving the Clown after him. He stops and turns sharply, in exactly the position Faustus has just quitted, and confronts his ragged congener in precise imitation and parody of the scene just concluded.

WAGNER

Sirrah boy, come hither.

CLOWN

How, boy? swouns, boy! I hope you have seen many boys with such pickadevaunts as I have! Boy, quotha!

WAGNER

Tell me, sirrah, hast thou any comings-in?

CLOWN

Ay, and goings-out too. (*Shows rents in his rags*) You may see else!

WAGNER

Alas, poor slave! See how poverty jesteth in his nakedness! The villain is bare and out of service, and so hungry that I know he would give his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton though it were blood-raw!

CLOWN

How! My soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton though 'twere blood-raw! Not so, good friend: by'r lady, I had need have it well roasted and good sauce to it, if I pay so dear!

WAGNER

Well, wilt thou serve me? and I'll make thee go like "*Qui mihi discipulus.*"

CLOWN

How, in verse?

WAGNER

No, sirrah, in beaten silk and staves-acre.

CLOWN

How, how, knaves-acre! Ay, I thought that was all the land his father left him! — Do you hear? I would be sorry to rob you of your living.

WAGNER

Sirrah, I say in staves-acre!

[*Shows that he means the stuff of his jerkin.*

CLOWN

Oho, oho, staves-acre! Why then, belike, if I were your man, I should be full of — vermin.

WAGNER

So thou shalt, whether thou be'st with me or no! — But, sirrah, leave your jesting, and bind yourself presently unto me for seven years, — or I'll turn all the lice about thee into familiars, and they shall tear thee in pieces!

CLOWN

Do you hear, sir? You may save that labor: they are too familiar with me already. Swouns, they are as bold with my flesh as if they had *paid* for *their* meat and drink!

WAGNER

Well, do *you* hear, sirrah? — Hold, take these guilders.

[*Gives money.*

CLOWN

And what should I do with these?

WAGNER

Why, now, sirrah, thou art at an hour's warning, whensoever and wheresoever the devil shall fetch thee.

CLOWN

No, no! Here, take your gridirons again!

WAGNER

Truly, I'll none of them.

CLOWN

Truly, but you shall!

WAGNER (*into the pit*)

Bear witness I gave them him!

CLOWN (*frantic, scared of the pit*)

Bear witness I give them you again!

WAGNER (*turning on him awesomely*)

Well, I will cause two devils presently to fetch thee away. (*Into the pit*) Baliol and Belcher!

CLOWN (*trembling but swaggering*)

Let your Balio and your Belcher come here, and I'll knock them, they were never so knocked since they were devils! Say I should kill one of them, what would folks say? "Do you see yonder tall fellow in the round slop? He has killed the devil." So I should be called Kill-devil all the parish over.

WAGNER

Well, sirrah, follow me.

CLOWN

But do your hear? If I should serve you, would you teach *me* to raise up Banios and Belcheos?

WAGNER

I will teach thee to turn thyself to anything — to a dog, or a cat, or a mouse, or a rat, or anything.

CLOWN

How! A Christian fellow to a dog or a cat, a mouse or a rat? No, no, sir: if you turn me into anything, let it be into the likeness of a little pretty frisking flea, that I may be here and there and everywhere. *I'll* tickle the pretty wenches' plackets!

WAGNER

Well, sirrah, come.

CLOWN

But do you hear, Wagner? —

WAGNER

How!! — Baliol and Belcher!

CLOWN

Oh, Lord, I pray, sir, let Banio and Belcher go sleep.

WAGNER

Villain, call me *Master* Wagner, and let thy left eye be diameterily fixed upon my right heel, with "*quasi vestigias nostras insistere!*"

[*Exit up the left bridge.*

CLOWN

God forgive me, he speaks Dutch fustian! Well, I'll follow him: I'll serve him, — that's flat!

[*Exit after him.*

Behind the curtain the Study has been restored, and Faustus is there discovered,

sitting, the book open before him.

FAUSTUS (*restless and haunted*)

Now, Faustus, must
Thou needs be damn'd, and canst thou not be saved.
What boots it then to think of God or Heaven?
Away with such vain fancies, and despair!
Despair in God! Now go not backward! No!
Faustus, be resolute! Why waver'st thou?
Oh, something soundeth in mine ears:
"Abjure this magic! Turn to God again!"
Ay, and Faustus *will* turn to God again!
(*Half rises*)
To God? (*Stops*) He loves thee not.
(*Sits again; moodily*)
The god thou serv'st is thine own appetite!

[*As he sits staring fearfully before him, the Good Angel shines forth again behind him.*

GOOD ANGEL

Sweet Faustus, leave that execrable art!

FAUSTUS (*as to his conscience, unaware of the Angel*)

Contrition, prayer, repentance, — what of them?

[*Then the Evil Angel emerges again from the pit in front of him.*

GOOD ANGEL

Oh, they are means to bring thee unto Heaven!

EVIL ANGEL

Rather, illusions, fruits of lunacy,
That make men foolish that do trust them most!

GOOD ANGEL

Sweet Faustus, think of Heaven and heavenly things!

EVIL ANGEL

No, Faustus, — think of honor and of wealth!

FAUSTUS (*under his breath*)

Of wealth!
Why, the signiory of Emden! — shall be mine!
(*As he goes on, both Angels disappear*)
When Mephistophilis shall stand by me,
(*remembering his awful guise!*)
What God can hurt thee, Faustus? Thou art safe.
Cast no more doubts! (*Rises*) Come, Mephistophilis!
And bring glad tidings from great Lucifer!
"*Veni! Veni! Mephistophile!*"

(*The little gray Friar enters by the door, and stands opposite him, across the table*)

Now tell me, what says Lucifer, thy lord?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

That I shall wait on Faustus while he lives,
So he will buy my service with his soul.

FAUSTUS

Already Faustus hath hazarded that for thee.

MEPHISTOPHILIS

But, Faustus, thou must bequeath it solemnly,
And write a deed of gift with thine own blood,

For that security craves great Lucifer.
If thou deny it, I will back to hell.

FAUSTUS

Stay, Mephistophilis, and tell me, what good
Will my soul do thy lord?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Enlarge his kingdom.

FAUSTUS

Is that the reason why he tempts us thus?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

"*Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris.*"

FAUSTUS

Why, have *you* any pain, that torture others?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

As great as have the human souls of men.
But tell me, Faustus, shall I have thy soul?
And I will be thy slave, and wait on thee,
And give thee more than thou hast wit to ask.

FAUSTUS

Ay, Mephistophilis, I give it thee.

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Then, Faustus, stab thine arm courageously,
And bind thy soul that at some certain day
Great Lucifer may claim it as his own, —
And then be thou as great as Lucifer!

[*With a knife that lies upon the table, Faustus, still standing, stabs his left arm.*

FAUSTUS

Lo, Mephistophilis, for love of thee
I cut mine arm, and with my proper blood
Assure my soul to be great Lucifer's —
Chief lord and regent of perpetual night!

View here the blood that trickles from mine arm,
And let it be propitious for my wish.

[*A thin trickle of red becomes visible upon his black sleeve.*

MEPHISTOPHILIS (*gloating*)

But, Faustus, thou must
Write it, in manner of a deed of gift.

FAUSTUS

Ay, so I will.
(*He sits and writes, wetting a quill on his sleeve*)
But, Mephistophilis,
My blood congeals, and I can write no more.

MEPHISTOPHILIS

I'll fetch thee fire to dissolve it straight.

[*He runs eagerly, quickly, down the steps into the pit, in spite of his gown.*

FAUSTUS (*uneasy again*)

What might the staying of my blood portend?
Is it unwilling I should write this bill?
Why streams it not, that I may write afresh?
(*Reads*)
"Faustus gives to thee his soul" — ah, there it stayed!
Why shouldst thou not? Is not thy soul thine own?
Then write again "Faustus gives to thee his soul."

[*Mephistophilis reënters, up the steps, with a chafer of glowing coals.*

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Here's fire! Come, Faustus, set it on!

[*Masking the operation from the audience, he holds the chafer against Faustus's left arm, and then sets it down behind the black box-seat, center, — out of sight.*

FAUSTUS

So! Now the blood begins to clear again.
Now will I make an end immediately!
[*He wets the quill again, and writes.*

MEPHISTOPHILIS (*center, aside*)

Oh, what will I not do to obtain his soul?

FAUSTUS

Consummatum est! — This bill is ended.
(*And in a lower tone*)
And Faustus hath bequeathed his soul to Lucifer.
(*He turns to wipe and staunch the blood*)
But what is this inscription on mine arm?
"*Homo, fuge!*" Whither should I fly?
If unto God, He'll throw me down to hell.
My senses are deceived: here's nothing writ.
I see it plain: here in this place is writ
(*tracing it with his finger*)
"*Homo, fuge!*" Yet shall not Faustus fly!
[*He broods, looking terrified, but doggedly defiant.*

MEPHISTOPHILIS

I'll fetch him something to delight his mind.
[*He steps mysteriously to the edge of the pit and makes a sweeping, beckoning gesture: then stands motionless to the right of the box. Subterranean music sounds weirdly: Faustus looks up. A little red imp dances up the steps, carrying a gold crown above his head. Another follows with a lustrous ermine robe heaped in his arms. In time with the music, they set the crown on Faustus's head; he rises; and they drape the robe about him, dancing gravely. Then, with little bows to Mephistophilis, they depart as they came, dancing, and the music fades out. Faustus, regally appareled, stands behind his table.*

FAUSTUS (*awed at his own splendor*)
Speak, Mephistophilis, what means this show?
MEPHISTOPHILIS (*urbanely, with a suppressed smile*)
Nothing, Faustus, but to delight thy mind,
And show to thee what magic can perform.
FAUSTUS (*his grandeur swelling on him*)
But may *I* raise up spirits when I please?
MEPHISTOPHILIS
Ay, Faustus, and do greater things than these.
FAUSTUS (*thumps the table*)
Then there's enough for a thousand souls!
(*He comes around to Mephistophilis with the blood-written paper, facing him across the box*)
Here, Mephistophilis, receive this scroll —
A deed of gift of body and of soul, —
But yet conditionally that thou perform
All articles prescribed between us both.
MEPHISTOPHILIS
Faustus, I swear by hell and Lucifer
To effect all promises between us made!
FAUSTUS
Then hear me read them. (*Reads*) "On these conditions following: First, that Faustus may be a spirit in form and substance; secondly that Mephistophilis shall be his servant and shall do for him and bring him whatsoever; — I, John Faustus, of Wittenberg, Doctor, by these presents, do give both body and soul to Lucifer and Mephistophilis his minister, with full power, the articles above written being inviolate, to fetch or carry the said John Faustus, body and soul, flesh, blood, or goods, into their habitation wheresoever. By me, John Faustus."

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Speak, Faustus, — do you deliver this as your deed?

FAUSTUS

Ay, take it, (*flips it into his hand*) and the devil give thee good on't!

[*He returns behind his table.*

Mephistophilis examines the paper avidly.

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Now, Faustus, ask what thou wilt!

FAUSTUS

First will I question with thee about hell.

(*Sitting*)

Tell me, where is the place that men call hell?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Under the heavens.

FAUSTUS

Ay, but whereabout?

MEPHISTOPHILIS (*slowly approaching the table — the last three lines very emphatically, leaning on the table*)

Within the bowels of these elements,
Where we are tortured and remain forever.
Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed
In one self place, for where we are is hell
And where hell is there must we ever be:
And to conclude, when all the world dissolves
And every creature shall be purified,
All places shall be hell that are not Heaven.

FAUSTUS

Come, I think hell's a fable.

MEPHISTOPHILIS (*turning away*)

Ay, think so still, till experience change thy mind.

FAUSTUS

Why, think'st thou then that Faustus shall be damn'd?

MEPHISTOPHILIS (*deeply*)

Ay, of necessity, for here's the scroll
Wherein thou hast given thy soul to Lucifer!

FAUSTUS

Ay, and body too: but what of that?
Think'st thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine
That after this life there is any pain?
Tush, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales!

MEPHISTOPHILIS

But, Faustus, I am an instance to prove the contrary:
For *I* am damnéd, and am now in hell!

FAUSTUS

How! Now in hell?
Nay, an this be hell, I'll willingly be damn'd here!
What! walking, disputing, and so on? (*Laughs*)
But, leaving off this, let me have a wife —
The fairest maid in Germany.

MEPHISTOPHILIS (*scoffing*)

How! A wife?
I pr'ythee, Faustus, talk not of a *wife!*
Marriage is but a ceremonial toy.
I'll cull thee out the fairest courtesans
And bring them every morning to thy bed:
She whom thine eye shall like, thy heart shall have,
Be she as chaste as was Penelope,
As wise as Saba, or as beautiful
As was — great Lucifer before his fall!

FAUSTUS

Then — tell me, who made the world?

MEPHISTOPHILIS (*jarred, starting back from the table*)
I will not!

FAUSTUS (*in a tone of conscious command*)
Sweet Mephistophilis, tell me!

MEPHISTOPHILIS
Move me not, for I will not tell thee!

FAUSTUS (*rising and coming round towards him*)
Villain, have I not bound thee to tell me anything?
[*Reaches for his bond.*

MEPHISTOPHILIS (*guarding it*)
Ay, that is not against our kingdom: but this is.
(*As he goes down the steps*)
Think on hell, Faustus, for thou art damn'd!
[*Exit, very untranquilly, into the pit.*
The Good Angel shines forth again, behind.

GOOD ANGEL
Think, Faustus, upon *God* that made the world!

MEPHISTOPHILIS (*deep from the pit*)
Remember this!

FAUSTUS
Ay, go, accurséd spirit, to ugly hell!
(*Falls on his knees, to the left of the box*)
'Tis thou hast damn'd distresséd Faustus' soul!
(*Pauses*)
Is't not too late?

EVIL ANGEL'S VOICE (*below*)
Too late!

GOOD ANGEL
Never too late, if Faustus can repent!

EVIL ANGEL (*appearing, almost immediately under Faustus' eyes*)
If thou repent, devils will tear thee in pieces!

GOOD ANGEL

Repent, and they shall never raze thy skin!

FAUSTUS (*flinging his arms up and out in agony*)

Ah, Christ, my Savior!
Seek to save distresséd Faustus' soul!
(*Flings himself across the box; then shudderingly draws back*)
What art thou, Faustus, but a man condemn'd to die?
(*Slowly, looking out front once more*)
Thy fateful time doth draw to final end!
(*Recovers more composure*)
Despair doth drive distrust into my thoughts!
(*A spasm of trembling — then he grips himself. The Good Angel begins to fade*)
Confound these passions with a quiet sleep!
(*Rests his head on his right arm on the box, and closes his eyes*)
Tush, Christ did call the thief upon the cross:
Then rest thee, Faustus, quiet in conceit!

[*He sleeps. The Good Angel fades out. The Evil Angel with a hoarse hiss of triumph sinks back out of sight.*

Lucifer ascends the steps; Mephistophilis follows. Lucifer's deep roar startles Faustus up in fright.

LUCIFER

Christ cannot save thy soul, for he is just!
There's none but *I* have interest in the same!

FAUSTUS

Oh, who art thou that look'st so terrible?

LUCIFER (*mounting the box*)

I am Lucifer!

FAUSTUS (*in deadly fear*)

Oh, Faustus, they are come to fetch away thy soul!

LUCIFER

We come to tell thee thou dost injure us:
Thou talk'st of Christ, contrary to thy promise:
Thou shouldst not think of — God!

FAUSTUS (*in terror-struck entreaty*)

Nor will I henceforth! Pardon me in this,
And Faustus vows never to look to heaven,
Never to name God or to pray to him, —
To burn his Scriptures, slay his ministers,
And make my spirits pull his churches down!

LUCIFER

Do so, and we will highly gratify thee.
(*He descends from the box and turns, on Faustus's right, facing front. Mephistophilis, who has stayed below them on the steps, comes up and stands as though on guard at Faustus' left. Lucifer continues more genially*)
Faustus, we are come from hell to show thee some pastime. Sit down, and thou shalt see all the seven deadly sins appear in their proper shapes.

[*Faustus sits on the box between them — gleaming in ermine and ephemerally crowned, between the scaly black and the shrouding gray of his two masters, and appearing very small!*

FAUSTUS

That sight will be as pleasing unto me
As Paradise was to Adam, the first day
Of his creation!

LUCIFER

Talk not of Paradise or Creation, but mark!
(*Thundering*) Come away!

[*With a great sweep of his arm he hails the Show down the left bridge, along the platform and out up*

the right bridge. This show must be both comic and imaginatively stylized: it will be interesting as all personifications of abstractions are interesting. The first "Sin" — Pride — is a small girl perched on very high heels — what Hamlet calls "raised nearer heaven by the altitude of a chopine" — and clad mostly in white, with a long white ostrich plume sweeping down her back "like a fan of feathers" and short, outstanding skirts like a "periwig." Silver and light blue ornament her straightened, puffed, slashed, lined, laced, and bordered costume — artifice leaving very little resemblance to the human figure. She trips smartly to center, pertly speaks her lines there, facing left, as they all do, in profile, and tiptoes on very airily as Covetousness comes.

LUCIFER

Now, Faustus, examine them of their several names and dispositions.

FAUSTUS

What art thou, the first?

PRIDE

I am Pride. I disdain to have any parents. I am like Ovid's flea: I can creep into every corner. Sometimes like a periwig I sit upon a wench's brow, or like a fan of feathers I kiss her lips. But fie! what a scent is here! I'll not speak another word except the ground were perfumed, and covered with cloth of arras!

[*Enter Covetousness — a weazened, bent old dwarf with big gold brows and long gold beard and golden claws doubling the length of his dead-white fingers, — a high, round, forward-reaching head-dress over his yellow-white face, and garbed wholly in black with gold*

spots of different sizes sewn irregularly over his rich knee-length coat, and enormous gold buckles on his shoes. His walk shows age, and he mumbles.

FAUSTUS

What art thou, the second?

COVETOUSNESS

I am Covetousness: and might I have my wish, I would desire that this house and all the people in it (*gloating over the audience*) were turned to gold, that I might lock you up in my good chest, O my sweet gold!

[*He mumbles on. Wrath bursts down the bridge, flourishing a rapier in each hand. His flame-color hair flares away from his head; his face and hands are bright red; his skin-tight dress, of iridescent, glittering, stiffened silk, is steel-blue, edged with vivid scarlet, with flashing scarlet shoes, pointed, of cloth. He is tall and wiry, wriggles when he is still, and bounds away with a warning shout at his speech's end.*

FAUSTUS

What art thou, the third?

WRATH

I am Wrath — leapt out of a lion's mouth, to run up and down the world with these rapiers wounding myself when I had nobody to fight withal. I was born in hell, — and look to it, for some of you shall be my father!

[*He springs out, glinting, immediately behind Covetousness, as Envy takes his place: an ugly, half-grown brat, coal-black all over, with strips and streamers of livid green tattered over his lean body, — no hat or shoes. He shuffles and blinks: Faustus has to shout him away, and he snarls as he goes.*

FAUSTUS

What art thou, the fourth?

ENVY

I am Envy, born of a chimney sweeper and an oyster-wife. I cannot read, and therefore wish all books were burnt. I am lean with seeing others eat. Oh, that there would come a famine through all the world, that all might die, and I live alone! Then thou shouldst see how fat I would be! But must thou sit, and I stand? Come down, with a vengeance!

FAUSTUS

Away, envious rascal! — What art thou, the fifth?

[*To Gluttony, who has waddled down, — short, round, with puffy cheeks and little fat-cased eyes, dressed in russet and cream-color with high soft black shoes and a flat black cap and a broad leathern belt, — a little Falstaff, minus a beard, wheezing.*

GLUTTONY

Who, I, sir? I am Gluttony. My parents are all dead, and the devil a penny they have left me but a bare pension, and that is thirty meals a day and ten bevers, — a small trifle to suffice nature! Wilt thou bid me to supper?

FAUSTUS

No, I'll see thee hang'd! Thou wilt eat up all my victuals.

GLUTTONY

Then the devil choke thee!

[*He puffs away, by degrees.*

FAUSTUS

Choke thyself, glutton! — What art thou, the sixth?

[*To Sloth, who is reeling down, staggering all over the platform, not as though drunk, but yawning and*

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Here they are, too.

[*Turns to them.*

FAUSTUS

Oh, thou'rt deceived!

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Tut, I warrant thee!

[*With a wide gesture he refers Faustus to the starry sky up rear, comparing it with the book's diagram.*

Faustus is struck dumb, looking at the sky, his back to the audience.

FAUSTUS (*slowly turning to profile again*)

When I behold the heavens, then I repent,
And curse thee, wicked Mephistophilis,
Because thou hast deprived me of those joys!

MEPHISTOPHILIS (*scanning him quizzically*)

Why, Faustus,
Thinkest thou heaven is such a glorious thing?
I tell thee, 'tis not half so fair as thou,
Or any man that breathes on earth!

FAUSTUS

How prove'st thou that?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

'Twas made for man, therefore is man more excellent.

FAUSTUS

If it was made for man, 'twas made for me:
I will renounce this magic (*hurls down the book*), and repent!

[*Mephistophilis, throwing back his cowl, looks at him severely, as one would look at a never-satisfied, whimsical baby. Faustus sinks down on the black box, rebuked.*

The Good Angel glows forth behind Mephistophilis, and the Evil Angel fawns up at Faustus' feet.

GOOD ANGEL

Faustus, repent; yet God will pity thee!

EVIL ANGEL

Thou art a spirit; God cannot pity thee.

FAUSTUS (*in anguish*)

Who buzzeth in mine ears I am a spirit?
Be I a devil, yet God may pity me!
(*Rises, stands on the box, facing Mephistophilis below him on his left*)
Ay, God *will* pity me, if I repent!

EVIL ANGEL (*in a lingering whine as he sinks out of sight*)

Ay — but Faustus never *shall* repent!

[*The curtain closes. Here may come an intermission. Then Chorus enters, through the curtain, just as at the play's beginning. Either the scene at Rome, or the scene at Court, may be omitted, or both, — this "chorus" then continuing to that on page* 161. *And of course the play* may *be made to jump over to the larger type on page* 163 *without any pause, —Faustus merely recovering his pride, and keeping on his crown and white, shining, ermine robe, throughout the scene with Helen.*

CHORUS

Learnéd Faustus,
To know the secrets of astronomy
Graven in the book of Jove's high firmament,
Did mount himself to scale Olympus' top,
Being seated in a chariot burning bright,
Drawn by the strength of yokéd dragons' necks!

[He now is gone to prove cosmography,
And, as I guess, will first arrive in Rome,
To see the Pope, and manner of his court,
And take some part of holy Peter's feast
That to this day is highly solemnized.

[*He withdraws again through the curtain.*

Mephistophilis comes jauntily down the right bridge.

Faustus, following, in his black and crimson Doctor's gown once more, elects to go along the apron, to center; or, if there has been time, the curtain separates, as he enters, on a prospect of Rome, deep up-stage as the Grove-drop was, and Faustus pauses with his back against the right curtain, in profile against this landscape, — glamorous because of the unlighted stage through which it is seen, though of course the platform remains in full light, — and speaks equally glamorously.

FAUSTUS

Having now, my good Mephistophilis,
Pass'd with delight the stately town of Trier,
Environ'd round with airy mountain-tops,
With walls of flint, and deep-entrenchéd lakes, —
Not to be won by any conquering prince, —
Hast thou, as erst I did command,
Conducted me within the walls of Rome?

MEPHISTOPHILIS

I have, my Faustus, that thou may'st perceive
What Rome containeth to delight thee with;
(*In harmless mockery of Faustus's regular meter*) [1]
Know that this city stands upon seven hills,
And through the midst runs flowing Tiber's stream.
Upon the bridge called Ponte Angelo
Erected is a castle passing strong,
Within whose walls such store of ordnance are
And double cannons framed of carvéd brass
As match the days within one cómplete year, —
Besides the gates, and high pyrâmides
Which Julius Caesar brought from Africa.

FAUSTUS

Now by the kingdoms of infernal rule, —
Of Styx, and Acheron, — I swear I long
To see the monuments of bright-splendent Rome!
Come therefore, let's away!

[1] No actor acquainted with Goethe's Mephisto can help wishing to include in his characterization some of that pleasantly cynical humor which Marlowe's demon is too intense and unsubtle to show. Here is a plain, if unintended, opportunity.

MEPHISTOPHILIS

Nay, Faustus, stay:
(*whispers across the pit with exaggerated secrecy*)
And take some part of holy Peter's feast—
Where thou shalt see a troop of bald-pate friars—
[*Chuckles with some anticipatory mirth.*

FAUSTUS

Well, I'm content, to compass *them* some sport—
And by their folly make *us* merriment!
Then charm me, that I may be invisible,
Unseen of any whilst I stay in Rome,
To do whate'er I please!

MEPHISTOPHILIS (*extending a long black left arm toward him and motioning the curtains together*)

So, Faustus; now
Do what thou wilt, thou shalt not be discerned!
[*Faustus steps back: the curtain closes silently before him. Mephistophilis remains, near the right end of the platform, inconspicuous.*

A sennet sounds. Enter, down the left bridge, the Pope, his guest the Cardinal, and two, four or six attendant Friars, both Gray and Black.

POPE

My lord of Lorraine, wilt please you to draw near?
[*As they reach the center, Faustus's voice comes hollow out of the pit.*

FAUSTUS

Fall to, and the devil choke you an you spare!
[*The Pope turns and glares at the innocent friars, then looks about.*

POPE

How now! Who's that which spake? Friars, look about!

FIRST FRIAR

Here's nobody, if it like your Holiness.

CARDINAL

My lord, it may be some ghost newly crept out of purgatory (*all cross themselves*), come to beg a pardon of your Holiness.

POPE

It may be so. Friars, prepare a dirge, to lay the fury of this ghost! — Once again, my lord, draw near.

[*As they take another step toward the right, Faustus rises, by the same trap or ladder Mephistophilis had first used, at the Pope's elbow, and buffets him and the others so lustily that they turn pell-mell and rush screaming away and out, left. Faustus pursues.*

FAUSTUS

Come on, Mephistophilis! What shall we do?

[*Mephistophilis follows.*

(Catholic sentiment in the audience would make the foregoing scene inadvisable; but it is interesting as showing the Elizabethan love of Papist-baiting, and the gulf that separates this play from such religious works of only half a century before as the Christmas Miracle Play. If done, it must be done for farce values first, spectacle values second, — to break the monotony of the stylization without jarring with its prime motifs.)

[*Chorus reappears through the curtains.*

CHORUS

Now Faustus' fame is spread in every land:] *or*

[Now is his fame spread forth in every land:
Amongst the rest, the Emperor's is one,
Charles the Fifth, — at whose palace now
Faustus is feasted — 'mongst his noblemen!
What there he did, in triumph of his art,
I leave untold: your eyes shall see't performed.
[*He backs out.*

The little stage has been simply set for the Court by hanging, some distance back of the side walls, and also on the right, bright tapestries and arras of cloth of gold. The dais and throne is set against the left side, concealing its blackness in red and yellow, — and there sits the Emperor, Charles V, with his Empress on his right, robed and crowned, in profile facing Faustus who stands right. A few Attendants stand up-stage, and one richly-dressed Knight down left — a comic skeptic. This scene is now discovered.

EMPEROR

Master Doctor Faustus, I have heard strange report of thy knowledge in the black art, — how that none in my empire nor in the whole world can compare with thee for rare effects of magic. They say thou hast a familiar spirit by whom thou canst accomplish what thou list. This therefore is my request, that thou let me see some proof of thy skill, that mine eyes may be witnesses to confirm what mine ears have heard reported; and here I swear to thee, by the honor of mine imperial crown, that whatever thou doest, thou shalt be no ways prejudiced or endamaged.

KNIGHT (*aside*)

'Faith, he looks much like a conjurer!

FAUSTUS

My gracious Sovereign, though I must confess myself far inferior to the report men have published, yet, for that love and duty bind me thereunto, I am content to do whatsoever your majesty shall command me.

EMPEROR

Then, Doctor Faustus, mark what I shall say.
As I was sometime solitary set
Within my closet, sundry thoughts arose
About the honor of mine ancestors —
How they had won by prowess such exploits,
Subdued so many kingdoms, got such riches,
As we that do succeed, or they that shall
Possess our throne hereafter, shall, I fear me,
Never attain to that authority; —
Among which kings is Alexander the Great,
Chief spectacle of the world's preëminence,
The bright shining of whose glorious acts
Lightens the world with his reflecting beams.
It grieves my soul I never saw the man!
If therefore thou by cunning of thine art
Canst raise this man from hollow vaults below
Where lies entombed this famous conqueror,
And with him bring his beauteous paramour,
Both in their right shapes, gesture, and attire

They used to wear during their time of life, —
Thou shalt both satisfy my just desire
And give me cause to praise thee whilst I live.

FAUSTUS

My gracious lord, I am ready to accomplish your request, so far forth as by art and power of my spirit I am able to perform.

KNIGHT (*aside*)

I'faith, that's just nothing at all!

FAUSTUS

But, if it like your grace, it is not in my ability to present before your eyes the true substantial bodies of those deceased princes, which long since are consumed to dust.

KNIGHT (*aside*)

Ay, marry, Master Doctor, now there's a sign of grace in you, when you will confess the truth!

FAUSTUS

But such spirits as can lively resemble Alexander and his paramour shall appear before your grace, in that manner that they both lived in, in their most flourishing estate, which I doubt not will sufficiently content your imperial majesty.

EMPEROR

Go to, Master Doctor: let me see them presently.

KNIGHT

Do you hear, Master Doctor? You bring Alexander and his paramour before the Emperor!

FAUSTUS

How, then, sir?

KNIGHT

I'faith, that's as true as Diana turned me to a stag!

FAUSTUS

No, sir, but when Actaeon died, he left the horns for you. Mephistophilis —

[*Mumbles a brief charm.*

KNIGHT

Nay, an you go to conjuring, I'll be gone!

[*Exit, left.*

FAUSTUS (*finishes; then*)

I'll meet you anon for interrupting me so! — Here they are, my gracious lord!

[*Alexander and his Paramour appear, up right.*

EMPEROR (*as all, even Faustus, look breathlessly up at them*)

Master Doctor, I have heard this lady, while she lived, had a wart or mole on her neck. How shall I know whether it be so or no?

FAUSTUS

Your highness may boldly go and see.

[*The Emperor goes up to the apparitions, touches them, handles them.*

EMPEROR

Sure, these are no spirits, but the true substantial bodies of those two deceased princes!

[*The Shapes move off, left.*

FAUSTUS

I am glad they content you so well. — But it may be, madam, *you* take no delight in this: I have heard that women do long for some *dainties* or other. What is't, madam? Tell me, and you shall have it.

EMPRESS

Thanks, good Master Doctor; and for I see your courteous intent to pleasure me, I will not hide from you the thing my heart desires: Were it now summer, as it is January and the dead time of winter, I would desire no better meat than a dish of ripe grapes.

FAUSTUS

Alas, madam, that's nothing! — Mephistophilis — (*mumbles another brief charm*). — Were it a greater thing than this, so it would content you, you should have it.

(*Enter Mephistophilis, in his Scholar costume, bearing aloft a bunch of purple grapes, which he presents on his knees to the Empress*)

Here they be, madam: will 't please you taste on them?

EMPEROR (*crossing and examining them*)

Believe me, Master Doctor, this makes me wonder above the rest, that being in the dead time of winter and the month of January, how you should come by these grapes!

FAUSTUS

If it like your grace, the year is divided into two circles over the whole world, that, when it is here winter with us, in the contrary circle it is summer with them — as in India, Saba, and farther countries in the east; and, by means of a swift spirit that I have, I had them brought hither as you see. How do you like them, madam? Be they good?

EMPRESS (*having eaten several*)

Believe me, Master Doctor, they be the best grapes that e'er I tasted in my life before!

FAUSTUS

I am glad they content you so, madam. — (*To the Emperor*) Wilt please your highness now to send for the knight that was so pleasant with me here of late?

EMPEROR

One of you call him forth. (*Mephistophilis bows and goes out quickly, left. The Knight bursts in thence with a pair of reindeer antlers and ears fastened to his head, stamping with rage*) How now, Sir Knight? (*Laughing*) Feel on thine head!

[*All laugh.*

KNIGHT

Thou damnéd wretch and execrable dog,
How durst thou thus abuse a gentleman?
Villain, I say, undo what thou hast done!

FAUSTUS

Oh, not so fast, sir: there's no haste. But are you remembered how you crossed me in my conference with the Emperor? I think I have met with you for it!

[*The Knight can only bleat!*

EMPEROR (*rocking with laughter, is sobered by that bleating bray, — and fearful that his Knight will be made dumb*)

Good Master Doctor, at my entreaty release him. He hath done penance sufficient!

FAUSTUS (*bowing low*)

My gracious lord, not so much for the injury he offered me here in your presence, as to delight you with some mirth, hath Faustus worthily requited this injurious knight; which being all I desire, I am content to release

him of his horns: — and, Sir Knight, hereafter speak well of Scholars! (*Shoves him off toward left, calling*) Mephistophilis, transform him straight!

[*Exit the Knight.*

EMPEROR (*handing the Empress up*)

Come, madam, let us in, where we must well reward this learnèd man for the great kindness he hath showed to you.

EMPRESS

And so I will, my lord, and, whilst I live, rest beholding for this courtesy.

[*Raising the grapes in a pretty salute to Faustus.*

FAUSTUS

I humbly thank your grace.

EMPEROR

Come, Master Doctor, follow us, and receive your reward.

[*They start up-stage, and the curtain closes on them.*

(This scene is rather pitiful after Faustus's dreams of being Emperor himself. It exists only as part of the history of the actual Faustus, and to show simple wonders to the gaping Elizabethans. It is also rather more expensive to produce than it is worth.)

[*Chorus reënters through the curtain.*

CHORUS

When Faustus had with pleasure ta'en the view] *or*

And when he had with pleasure ta'en the view
Of rarest things and royal courts of kings,
He stay'd his course, and so returnéd home, —
Where such as bear his absence but with grief —
I mean his friends and near'st companions —
Did gratulate his safety with kind words;
And in their conference of what befell
Touching his journey through the world and air,
They put forth questions of astrology
Which Faustus answer'd with such learnéd skill
As they admired and wonder'd at his wit!

[*Faustus enters, in his original costume, down the left bridge, proudly, followed by three reverencing Scholars, and a venerable Doctor of Divinity, aloof and doubtful, and last by*

Mephistophilis in his Scholar's guise, who remains standing at the bridge-head, overseeing the stage, hawklike and commanding. Chorus meets his eye: they confront each other a minute; then Chorus backs austerely through the curtain. Faustus, reaching center, turns ready for requests, self-conscious, unaware of Mephistophilis' proprietary glance.

FIRST SCHOLAR (*humbly*)

Master Doctor Faustus, since our conference about fair ladies, which was the beautifulest in all the world, we have determined with ourselves that Helen of Greece was the admirablest lady that ever lived. Therefore, Master Doctor, if you will do us that favor as by your art to let us see that peerless dame of Greece whom all the world admires for majesty, we should think ourselves *much* beholding unto you!

FAUSTUS

Gentlemen,
For that I know your friendship is unfeigned,
And Faustus' custom is not to deny
The just requests of those that wish him well—
(*Perhaps with a glance at the old Divine*)—
You shall behold that peerless dame of Greece
No otherways for pomp and majesty
Than when Sir Paris crossed the seas with her!
Be silent, then, for danger is in words.

[*He signs to Mephistophilis, who makes an imperious gesture toward the right. Music sounds distantly—a minor, sweet Greek melody on pipes (oboe?)—and through the right aperture comes Helen, and glides, statuesque, rigid, along the apron, close against the black curtain. The Scholars, except the old Doctor at the extreme left, kneel. Faustus stands gazing, rapt. Mephistophilis moves a little way down the bridge as Helen approaches, and when she disappears through the left aperture he follows her out. Utter silence, except for the music, reigns while she passes; then the Scholars rise, awed, from their knees.*

SECOND SCHOLAR

Too simple is my wit to tell her praise,
Whom all the world admires for majesty!

THIRD SCHOLAR

No marvel though the angry Greeks pursued
With ten years' war the rape of such a queen,
Whose heavenly beauty passeth all compare!

FIRST SCHOLAR

Since we have seen the pride of Nature's works
And only paragon of excellence,
Let us depart; and for this glorious deed
Happy and blest be Faustus evermore!

FAUSTUS

Gentlemen, farewell: the same I wish to you!

[*The three Scholars, bowing, pass him, singly, and go out up the right bridge. The old Doctor, flushed and tense with indignation and with pity, constrains himself to pass him likewise, —Faustus watching him haughtily, but breathing with relief when he has passed, — but then turns on Faustus with sudden profound earnestness.*

DOCTOR

Ah, Doctor Faustus, that I might prevail
To guide thy steps unto the Way of Life,
By which sweet path thou may'st attain the Goal, —
That shall conduct thee to celestial rest!
Break, heart, drop, blood, and mingle it with tears —
Tears falling from repentant heaviness
Of thy most vile and loathsome, heinous sin,
As no commiseration may expel
But mercy, Faustus, of thy Savior sweet —
Whose blood alone can wash away *thy guilt!*

[*Faustus looks at him somberly: shaken, but summoning up all his pride.*

FAUSTUS

My heart's so hardened, I cannot repent!
Scarce can I name "salvation", "faith", or "heaven",
But fearful echoes thunder in mine ears:
"Faustus, thou art damn'd!" Then swords, and knives, (*seeing them all in imagination*)

Poison, guns, halters, and envenomed steel
Are laid before me to despatch myself, —
And long ere this I should have slain myself,
Had not sweet pleasure conquered deep despair!
Shall (Have) I not make (made) blind Homer sing to me
Of Alexander's love and Œnon's death,
And shall (hath) not he that built the walls of Thebes
With ravishing sound of his melodious harp
Make (Made) music with my Mephistophilis?
Why should I die, or basely then despair!
I am resolved: Faustus shall ne'er repent!

(*But the Doctor merely stands and looks at him.*
Mephistophilis reënters, coming down the left bridge, and, scenting trouble, advances along the platform to Faustus' left, looking the Doctor in the eye.
Faustus, relieved to see him, turns to him)

Now, Mephistophilis, the restless course
That time doth run with calm and silent foot,
Shortening my days and thread of vital life,
Calls for the payment of my latest hours (years).

Philosophy is odious and obscure:
Both law and physic are for petty wits:
Divinity (*alluding to the Doctor*) is basest of the three —
Unpleasant, harsh, contemptible and vile:
And I, that have with cóncise syllogisms
Gravel'd the pastors of the German church
And made the flowering pride of Wittenberg
Swarm to my problems as th' infernal spirits
On sweet Musaeus when *he* came to hell,
Will be as cunning as Agrippa was
Whose shadow made all Europe honor him,
And more frequented for this mystery
Than heretofore the Delphian oracle!
I'll have thee fill the public schools with silk,

(*still aiming at the Doctor, who continues steadfast*)
Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad;

I'll have thee read me strange philosophy,
And tell the secrets of all foreign kings;
I'll have thee wall all Germany with brass,
And make swift Rhine circle fair Wittenberg;
The miracles that my magic will perform
Shall make all nations to canónize me!

DOCTOR (*backing away theatrically, — pointing*)
Where art thou, Faustus? Wretch, what hast thou done?
Damn'd art thou, Faustus! Damn'd! Despair, and die!
Hell calls for right, and with a roaring voice
Says, "Faustus, come!"
[*Pointing at the glaring Mephistophilis.*

FAUSTUS (*glancing at Mephistophilis, and quailing; moving toward the Doctor*)
Ah, my sweet friend, I feel
I do repent; and yet I do despair!
Hell strives with Grace for conquest in my breast.
(*Shuddering*)
What shall I do to shun the snares of death?
(*Beating his breast*)
Accursèd Faustus, where is mercy now?
Thine hour is almost come! And Faustus now
Will come, to do *thee* right (*to the Doctor*)!

[*Silently, stiffly, Mephistophilis pulls out the dagger at his belt and drops on his left knee, holding it straight above his head in his right hand, keeping his left arm perpendicular, and making precise right angles of his knees. Faustus's left hand grasps the haft.*

DOCTOR (*starting forward*)
Good Faustus, stay!
Ah, stay thy desperate steps! (*Faustus stops*)
I see an angel hovers o'er thy head
And with a vial full of precious grace
Offers to pour the same into thy soul! —
Then call for mercy, and avoid despair!

FAUSTUS (*pressing down Mephistophilis' arm*)
Leave me a while, to ponder on my sins.
(*Gives him his hand in farewell*)
Thy words do comfort my distresséd soul!
DOCTOR
I go, sweet Faustus, but with heavy cheer,
(*seeing Mephistophilis black with rage*)
Fearing the ruin of thy hopeless soul!
[*Turns and goes off by the right bridge.*
Mephistophilis suddenly towers up, lean, terrifying, taller than Faustus, and extends against him a long accusing arm and finger, — having restored the dagger to his girdle, — roaring so closely and dreadfully that Faustus' heart quite fails him: he trembles.
MEPHISTOPHILIS
Thou traitor Faustus! I arrest thy "soul"
For disobedience to my sovereign lord!
Revolt![1] or I'll in piecemeal tear thy flesh!
FAUSTUS (*retreating, cringing, crying*)
Sweet Mephistophilis, entreat thy lord
To pardon my unjust presumption, —
And with my blood again I will confirm
My former vow I made to Lucifer!
MEPHISTOPHILIS (*absolute master now*)
Do it then, quickly, with unfeignéd heart,
Lest greater danger do attend thy drift!
FAUSTUS (*meanly*)
Torment, sweet friend, that base and crooked age
(*gesturing after the Doctor*)
That did dissuade me from thy Lucifer
With greatest torments that our[2] hell affords!
MEPHISTOPHILIS (*through his teeth*)
His faith is great: I cannot touch his soul;
But what I may afflict his body with
I will attempt, — which is but little worth!
FAUSTUS (*wishing only to forget*)
One thing, good servant, let me crave of thee, (*or:*

[1] i.e., recant.

[2] The significance of this "*our* hell" must not be missed.

And one thing straightway let me crave of thée,)
To glut the longing of my heart's desire:
That I might have unto my paramour
That heavenly Helen which I saw of late, (*or:*
That pride of Nature's works, that peerless dame
And only paragon of excellence,
Whose heavenly beauty passeth all compare,
Whom all the world admires for majesty, —
Helen of Greece!)
Whose sweet embracings may extinguish clean
Those thoughts that do dissuade me from my vow,
And keep mine oath I made to Lucifer.

[*To him, still trembling, Mephistophilis steps, lays a master's hand on his shoulder, braces him.*

MEPHISTOPHILIS (*in a businesslike tone*)

Faustus, this, or what else thou shalt desire,
Shall be performed in twinkling of an eye!

[*Turning, he makes the same imperious gesture as formerly, toward the left: Helen appears at the bridge-head. Faustus straightens up with anticipation, and Mephistophilis, encouraging him toward her, goes to the extreme right.*

Helen, her music behind her, moves divinely down, facing the audience with set, marble features and swelling bosom. [*Faustus, giving way to the sweet surge of reaction from his terror, creeps, as under a spell, to center.*] *As she pauses opposite him, once more in profile and motionless save for her deep breathing, Faustus bursts into the world-famous apostrophe, during which they gradually meet and kiss.*

FAUSTUS

Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss!

Her lips suck forth my soul: see, where it flies!
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
(*Embracing her*)
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena!
I will be Paris, and for love of thee
Instead of Troy shall Wittenberg be sack'd;
And I will combat with weak Menelaus,
And wear thy colors on my pluméd crest, —
Yes, I will wound Achilles in the heel,
And then return to Helen for a kiss!
(*Kisses her again*)
Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appear'd to hapless Semele,
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azured arms; —
And none but thou shalt be my paramour!

[*He turns her around and leads her off, up left: she cold and marvelous still, he on fire with his own poetry.*

Her music, which has continued right through the speech, grows louder still till they have passed out of sight through the curtain, Helen first; then dies away.

The old Doctor reënters by the right aperture and goes a little way along the apron, as though to pursue and rescue Faustus. There is a stirring and a seething in the pit beneath him — the Evil Angel slowly rises at his feet, and Lucifer's armor gleams and his deep voice mutters. Mephistophilis slinks cautiously up the right bridge.

DOCTOR

Accurséd Faustus, miserable man,
That from thy soul exclude'st the grace of Heaven,
And fly'st the throne of His tribunal seat!
(*Looks down*)

Satan begins to sift me with his pride.
As in this furnace God shall try my faith,
My faith, vile Hell, shall triumph over thee!
Ambitious fiends, see how the heavens smile
At your repulse, and laugh your state to scorn!
(*Sees Mephistophilis trying to cut him off, and starts back toward the right. Mephistophilis' claws reach for him, but he* looks *him back*)
Hence, Hell! for hence I fly unto my God.

[*Exit, Mephistophilis pursuing him.*

(If only the abbreviated version is given, Helen is gestured in at the door to the study, and comes down to Faustus' right; and at the end of his speech the curtain closes, to her music, upon the three of them. There is then a brief interval before it parts again, upon Faustus' distress among the Scholars.

It might be possible, at the close of his Helen speech, for the clock to begin striking eleven. Faustus would then start, shiver, and let his white ermine robe fall from him. Helen and Mephistophilis would back away from him, stiff and still. As the clock finished, he would doff his crown, let it fall on the robe, and, hugging himself, hasten in dread away, down the left bridge, as the curtain closed. Then would come his last speech.)

[*Wagner whips through the curtain, and stands center — his finger on his lips: at once a startling, a smiling, and a hushing, awing apparition.*

WAGNER

I think my master shortly means to die,
For he to me hath given all his goods!
And yet methinks that if his death were near
He would not banquet and carouse amongst
The students, as he doth, even now, — who are
At supper with such belly-cheer
(*clasping his sides, smacking his lips, and rolling his eyes*)
As Wagner ne'er beheld in all his life!
See, where they come! Belike the feast is ended.

[*He shrinks, and cuts back within the curtain, as Faustus strides quickly and fearfully down the left bridge, the Scholars following him. Or, omitting Wagner:*

Faustus is discovered once more in his Study, striding up and down in despair, the Scholars looking on.

FAUSTUS

Ah, gentlemen!

FIRST SCHOLAR

What ails Faustus?

FAUSTUS

Ah, my sweet chamber-fellow, — had I lived with thee, then had I lived still! but now I die eternally. (*Afraid to look into the pit, but indicating it*) Look, comes he not? comes he not?

SECOND SCHOLAR

What means Faustus?

THIRD SCHOLAR

Belike he is grown into some sickness by being over-solitary.

FIRST SCHOLAR

If it be so, we'll have physicians to cure him. (*To Faustus*) 'Tis but a surfeit! Never fear, man!

FAUSTUS (*deeply, passionately*)

A surfeit of deadly sin, that hath damn'd both body and soul!

SECOND SCHOLAR

Yet, Faustus, look up to Heaven. Remember, God's mercies are infinite!

FAUSTUS (*rapidly; but prolonging, almost wailing, the emphatic words*)

But *Faustus'* offence can *ne'er* be pardoned! — The serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus! . . . Ah, gentlemen, hear me with patience,

and tremble not at my speeches! Though my heart pants and quivers to remember that I have been a student here these thirty years, — oh, would that I had never seen Wittenberg, never read book! And what wonders I have done, all Germany can witness, yea, all the world, — for which Faustus hath lost both Germany and the world, — yea, heaven itself, heaven, the seat of God, the throne of the blessed, the kingdom of joy, — and must remain in hell forever, — hell, ah, hell forever! Sweet friends, what shall become of Faustus, being in hell forever?

THIRD SCHOLAR

Yet, Faustus, call on God.

FAUSTUS

On God, whom Faustus hath abjured? On God, whom Faustus hath blasphemed?! Ah, my God, I would weep! — but the devil draws in my tears. Gush forth, *blood* instead of tears! — yea, life and soul! Oh, he stays my tongue! I would lift up my hands, — but see, they hold them, they hold them!

ALL

Who, Faustus?

FAUSTUS

Lucifer and Mephistophilis. Ah, gentlemen, I gave them my soul for my cunning!

ALL

God forbid!

FAUSTUS

God forbade it, indeed, but Faustus hath done it; for vain *pleasure* hath Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity! I writ them a bill with mine own blood: the time is come, and he will fetch me!

FIRST SCHOLAR

Why did not Faustus tell us of this before, that divines might have prayed for thee?

FAUSTUS

Oft have I thought to have done so; but the devil threatened to tear me in pieces if I named God, — to fetch both body and soul if I once gave ear to divinity, — and now 'tis too late! Gentlemen, away! lest you perish with me!

SECOND SCHOLAR

Oh, what shall we do to save Faustus?

FAUSTUS

Talk not of me, but save yourselves, and depart!

THIRD SCHOLAR

God will strengthen me: I will stay with Faustus.

FIRST SCHOLAR

Tempt not God, sweet friend; but let us into the next room, and there pray for him.

FAUSTUS

Ay, pray for me, pray for me! and what noise soever ye hear, come not unto me, for nothing can rescue me!

SECOND SCHOLAR

Pray thou, and we will pray that God may have mercy upon thee!

FAUSTUS (*without hope*)

Gentlemen, farewell. If I live till morning I'll visit you; if not, Faustus is gone to hell.

ALL (*solemnly*)

Faustus, farewell!

[*They say it either severally or together, and solemnly go out by the right bridge* (*or, depart by the study door*).

Faustus, left alone, center (*or, coming down the left*

bridge onto the platform), trembles. A clock, near, on the stage, strikes eleven.

FAUSTUS (*softly, pathetically, to himself*)

Ah, Faustus,
Now (*prolonged*) hast thou but one bare hour to live,
And then thou must be damn'd perpetually!
(*In subdued but intense upward appeal*)
Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven,
That time may cease, and midnight never come!
Fair Nature's eye, rise, rise again, and make
Perpetual day, — or (*more passionate*) let this hour be but
A year! — a month! — a week! — a natural day!
That Faustus may repent, and save his soul!
Oh, lente, lente currite, noctis equi!
(*Deeply, positively to himself, — to face reality*)
The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,
The devil will come, and Faustus must be damn'd.
(*Revolting, springing up with arms stretched out above his head*)
Oh, I'll leap up to my God! —
(*With a frantic gesture of tearing off invisible claws that clutch at his vitals*) Who pulls me down?
(*Shouting, with one arm straight up, the other still grappling the imaginary fiend*)
See! See! Where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!
(*Agonized*)
One drop would save my soul!
(*Struggling to reach it*) Half a drop!
(*Calling, screaming*) Ah! My Christ!
(*To the devil below him, clutching his breast with both hands, in a voice of physical torment*) Ah,

Rend not my heart for naming of my Christ!
(*Sobbing*)
Yet will I call on Him!
(*In gasping entreaty*) Oh, spare me, Lucifer!
(*Looking up again, spent, hopeless*)
Where is it now? 'Tis gone.
(*In overawed but utter terror*) And see, where God
Stretcheth his arm and bends his ireful brows!
(*With a different terror — guilty, remorseful, dreadful*)
Mountains and hills, come, come and fall on me,
And hide me from the heavy wrath of God!
(*Low — impressing upon himself that he cannot escape*) No, No!
(*Strongly*)
Then will I headlong run into the earth!
Earth, gape! (*Stamps!*)
(*With a hopeless wail*) Oh, no, it will not harbor me!
(*He looks up, weeping but speaking quickly, — with tears, not sobs*)
You stars that reign'd at my nativity,
Whose influence hath allotted death and hell,
Now draw up Faustus like a foggy mist
Into the entrails of yon laboring clouds,
That, when you vomit forth into the air,
My limbs may issue from your smoky mouths, —
So that my soul may but ascend to Heaven!
(*The clock strikes the half hour. Faustus recoils, quivering*)
Ah, half the hour is past: 'twill all be past anon!
(*He falls on his knees, praying not loudly but with utmost fervor*) O God,
If thou wilt not have mercy on my soul
Yet for Christ's sake whose blood hath ransom'd me

Impose some end to my incessant pain!
Let Faustus live in hell a thousand years, —
A hundred thousand, — and at last be saved!
(*His hands drop, his head droops; he moans*)
Oh, no end is limited to damnéd souls!
(*To himself, imploring bitterly*)
Why wert thou not a creature wanting soul?
Or why is this immortal that thou hast?
This soul should fly from me, and I be changed
Unto some brutish beast! — All beasts are happy:
Their souls are soon dissolved in elements:
(*lower, slower*)
But mine must live still to be plagued in hell!
(*With clenched fists and tense sincerity*)
Curs'd be the parents that engender'd me!
(*Struggling to his feet, his voice rising*)
No, Faustus, curse thyself! curse Lucifer
That hath deprived thee of the joys of Heaven!
(*The clock begins to strike twelve. Faustus shrieks*)
Oh, it strikes! it strikes! Now, body, turn to air,
Or Lucifer will bear thee quick to hell!
(*Lightning flashes, and thunder drowns out the clock. Trembling in every limb, with quavering voice, not loud*)
O Soul, be changed to little water-drops
And fall into the ocean, ne'er be found!
(*The twelfth stroke booms from the bell, and a subterranean roaring begins, rumbling behind and under his feet. He kneels again in his agony, screaming*)
My God! My God! Look not so fierce on me!
(*Up-towers by his left the blaze-eyed mask and skeleton long arms of the original Mephistophilis; out-flames the Evil Angel under his right; he tries to push them away with vibrating hands*)

Adders and serpents, let me breathe a while!
(*He struggles to get up: they hold his hands*)
Ugly hell, gape not!
(*Lucifer's voice thunders behind him*)
Come not, Lucifer!
(*Lucifer's enormous hands swing high in the air behind him and descend on his shoulders, dragging him backwards off the platform*)
I'll burn my books! (*All in a continuous shrieking crescendo, the extreme of which is now reached as in falling backwards he sees the Mephistophilis mask leering down into his face*) Ah, Mephistophilis!

[*He disappears . . . Stillness, and a breathing-space.*

Chorus enters through the curtain as at the beginning.

CHORUS

Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,
And burnéd is Apollo's laurel bough
That sometime grew within this learnéd man.
Faustus is gone: regard his hellish fall,
Whose fiendful fortune may exhort the wise
Only to wonder at unlawful things
Whose deepness doth entice such forward wits
To practise more than heavenly power permits.
(*Then, solemnly*)
"*Terminat hora diem; terminat auctor opus.*"

[*And he withdraws; or perhaps remains, in his gray and gold, till the audience is quite departed, without clamorous vulgarity or calling forth of actors, marring the tragic purgation.*

FINIS

RICARDO AND VIOLA

A Romantic Comedy
chiefly by
FRANCIS BEAUMONT

Adapted from *The Coxcomb*
In the Folio of Beaumont and Fletcher's Works, 1647

INTRODUCTION

FRANCIS BEAUMONT, born about 1585, is the most poetical of Shakespeare's successors, and the most openly a disciple of Shakespeare among all the great playwrights of the early seventeenth century. His dramatic verse is the most lucid and succinct that was written in his time; and his theatrical sense — though tending, in common with his age, to extremes — is the purest and freshest of the period. How much he owes to John Fletcher, his famed collaborator, a man six years his senior, we cannot tell: but every student of their joint works can guess how much John Fletcher was owing to him! Fletcher's part (the lesser part) in *Philaster*, *The Maid's Tragedy*, *A King and No King* — the best of their plays — is far better written and characterized than when Fletcher is working alone, or later, with a man like Massinger. Only the fellowship of Shakespeare himself in *Henry VIII*, 1613, elevated Fletcher to a greater achievement than Beaumont had earlier spurred him to.

Beaumont seems to have written only from about 1607 (*The Woman-Hater*) to about 1611 (*The Knight of the Burning Pestle* — his last play, seemingly — quickly written, to please himself, not the public, with a girding at the romance he and Fletcher had so popularized). He married in 1613 and died on March 6, 1616, — six weeks before Shakespeare. "A belated Elizabethan", Professor Baker calls him: a clear-spirited gentleman, writing "down" to the general taste: an amateur, loving the theater, adept in it, but independent of it,

who has left us beautiful, passionate plays and scenes and passages which should not be allowed to die.

The Coxcomb, from which our little comedy is taken, is a strange play. Fletcher's hand is not marked in it, but most of it reads even less like Beaumont. The Ricardo and Viola story is the underplot — easily separable from the rather unsavory main plot, and in its later scenes unmistakably impressed with Beaumont's most individual poetry and thought. Viola herself is wholly Beaumont's creation. Ricardo in his repentance is equally Beaumont's man. All the rest, in greater or less degree, is questionable, — but it is all excellent *stage-play*, — interesting, suspensive, clear-cut, and *effective*. There is a record that it was played, separated and enlarged, under the title of *The Fugitives*, as lately as 1792.

It has been adapted here for a simple Elizabethan stage — that is, a fore-stage and an inner stage, with five alternations of scene between them. The first scene, on the fore-stage between Andrugio's house and the tavern, is put together from the first, third, and fourth scenes of *The Coxcomb's* first act. The second scene, *in* the tavern, is Act I, Scene 5, of *The Coxcomb*, and the third scene, Act I, Scene 6. The fourth scene, in the country, is a combination of the second scene of Act II and the third scene of Act III of *The Coxcomb;* the fifth scene is the fourth of Act II; and the sixth and last scene is made up of Act IV, Scene 1, followed by Act V, Scene 2, with inserts from Act IV, Scene 2, and Act V, Scene 3. The playing-time is possibly an hour.

The Italian names, a romantic convention merely, can deceive no one: the characters are English types.

Ricardo and his three bully fellows are the wild young gallants so frequent on the stage in the realistic period at the final transition of which into renewed romance *The Coxcomb* was manifestly composed. Valerio is a hypocritical squire, — perhaps a deliberate sneer at Puritanism, — cherishing a droll, unmerited, but lofty self-esteem. The Drawer, the Tinker, his Trull, the Milkmaids, are realistic portraits without Jonsonian "humors" — excellent parts for amateur "character actors", and fine diversification for the play. The costumes are such as every costumer can supply for oft-given Shakespearian comedies. Viola's should be rich and complete with kirtle, ruff, hat, and mantle; Valerio's severe, with a suggestion of the Puritan; the rest as characteristic, and selected with as much good taste, as possible. The six gentlemen, of course, wear swords, and most of the other characters have their "personal props." The scenery here planned (probably quite like that used at the original production) is very simple: but the three inner scenes should be very carefully and atmospherically lighted. The dawn and the rising sun's level rays from stage left in Scene Four must be very distinct from the flushing sunset on stage right that illumines Scene Six. And short though it is, Scene Two gives opportunity for a mass of realistic, atmospheric details in setting and business which the present adapter has barely indicated. In the two last scenes the *poetry* is important, and a suggestion of the *Faustus* stylization may be hazarded; but rapid, entertaining Romantic Comedy, not far removed from the spirit of Shakespeare's *Much Ado* and *Twelfth Night,* is the true effect the producer should intend.

CHARACTERS

RICARDO, a Young Gentleman. A typical romantic juvenile lead, with an unusual power of sustained emotional utterance in verse and a passionate sincerity of exaggerated feeling.

UBERTO		Uberto is rather "tough", stocky, and blustering.
PEDRO	His Companions.	Pedro is tall and heavy.
SILVIO		Silvio is slim and rather effeminate.

VALERIO, a Country Gentleman. Not a rustic squire, but gentlemanly, with a smug, Puritan righteousness that goes far to support his overweening self-esteem. He is frank enough when fearing no discovery: hypocrisy is his keynote — his creator jibing Puritan virtue and conceit in him to make a very interesting character.

ANDRUGIO, Viola's Father. A quick, kindly man about fifty-five, gray-haired. He has little to do but be distressed at his first entrance and gladly relieved at his last, and benevolent.

A SERVANT to Andrugio.

A TINKER, very burly and rough.

A TAVERN DRAWER, a boy, young, innocent, and very sleepy.

A CONSTABLE, very big, sensible, authoritative.

WATCHMEN, at least four. In uniforms, with halberds.

VIOLA, poetic, romantic, charming, and *an actress.*

THE TINKER'S TRULL, more brutal than he, — almost a caricature.

TWO MILKMAIDS, young, rustic, ingenuous, generous, outspoken, — sympathetic characters and good parts.

RICARDO AND VIOLA

SCENE. *A fore-stage, six or seven feet deep, backed by loose, full, gray-brown curtains and flanked by perpendicular flats, with doors, one into Andrugio's house, right, and the other into a tavern with an unobtrusive sign over it. This represents "A Street." When the curtains are parted it becomes merely the front of the stage.*

Behind the curtains, within a small proscenium and perhaps on a platform six or eight inches high, are two sets: First, an Elizabethan tavern room, with a door up-center, a fireplace right, and a mullioned window left, an ingle seat above the fireplace, and a large table with stools around it and mugs and plates on it, and wall-dressing ad lib. of pewter, etc.

Second, a dark blue cyclorama, and the trunk of a twisted apple tree at center with limbs branching out at the level of the top of the inner proscenium. This is lighted entirely from one side during the fourth scene, entirely from the other side during the sixth scene. Otherwise the lighting should be entirely from borders, with just enough from foots to kill shadows.

There is free passage between the curtains and the flats at each side, and also behind the inner proscenium, before the cyclorama's ends.

PROLOGUE [1]

This comedy, long forgot, by some thought dead,
By us preserved, once more doth raise her head,
And to your noble censures does present
Her outward form and inward ornament.
Nor let this smell of arrogance, since 'tis known
The makers, that confessed it for their own,
Were this way skilful, and without the crime
Of flatteries I may say did please the time.
The work itself too, when it first came forth,
In the opinion of men of worth
Was well received and favored, though some rude
And harsh among the ignorant multitude
That relish gross food better than a dish
That's cooked with care and served in to the wish
Of curious palates, wanting wit and strength
Truly to judge, condemned it for its length.
That fault's reformed; and now 'tis to be tried
Before such judges 'twill not be denied
A free and noble hearing; nor fear I
But 'twill deserve to have free liberty
And give you cause, and with content, to say
Their care was good that did revive this play.

[1] This Prologue, prefixed to *The Coxcomb* in the Folio of 1647, may be either printed in the program or, better, spoken from before the curtain by some good verse-speaker in costume or in evening-dress, with a spot-light on him from the rear of the house after the house lights have been dimmed out.

Scene I

A Street. Before Andrugio's House.
Blue light, but bright enough to see faces.
Discovered, Ricardo and Viola, left-center and center.

RICARDO

Let us make use of this stol'n privacy
And not lose time in protestation, mistress!
For 'twere in me a kind of breach of faith
To say again I love you.

VIOLA

Sweet, speak softly;
For though the venture of your love to me
Meets with a willing and a full return,
Should it arrive unto my father's knowledge
This were our last discourse.

RICARDO

How shall he know it?

VIOLA

His watching cares are such, for my advancement,
That everywhere his eye is fixed upon me.
This night, that does afford us some small freedom,
At much entreaty was hardly given me;
And I am never suffered to stir out
But he hath spies upon me. Yet, I know not, —
You have so won upon me that could I think
You would love faithfully (though to entertain
Another thought of you would be my death)
I should adventure on his utmost anger.

RICARDO

Why, do you think I can be false?

VIOLA

No, faith!
You have an honest face. But if you should —

RICARDO

Let all the stored vengeance of Heaven's justice —

VIOLA

No more! I do believe you. I will store me
With all the jewels, chains, gold, are trusted to me.
At the next corner, before one at the furthest,
Be ready to receive me!
[*Going right.*

RICARDO (*following*)

I desire
No bond beyond your promise.
(*She turns at the door and gives him her hand with pretty ardor*) To talk thus much
Before the door may breed suspicion. Away!
Those powers that prosper true and honest loves
Will bless our undertakings.

VIOLA

'Tis my wish, sir.
[*Exit, into house door, right.*

Enter, through separate slits in the curtains, rear, mock-stealthily, as from hiding, Uberto, Pedro, and Silvio.

Ricardo is disagreeably surprised, and taciturn.

UBERTO (*left; insolent, but friendly*)

Well, you must have this wench then?

RICARDO (*right; distantly*)

I hope so;
I am much o' the bowhand [1] else.

PEDRO (*center*)

Would I were hanged, —
'Tis a good loving little fool that dares venture
Herself upon a coast she never knew yet!

[1] *I.e.*, left-handed, inept.

RICARDO (*significantly*)
I launched her at my own charge, without partners,
And so I'll keep her.

UBERTO
What's the hour?[1]

RICARDO
Twelve.

[*Silvio lays an arm across Ricardo's shoulder.*

SILVIO
Tell me, Ricardo, wo't thou marry her?

RICARDO
Marry her? Why, what *should* I do with her?

[*All laugh.*

UBERTO
What shall *we* do the while? 'Tis yet scarce eleven.

SILVIO
There is no standing here. Is not this the place?

RICARDO
Yes.

PEDRO (*indicating the tavern, left*)
Let's slip into the tavern for an hour;
'Tis very cold.

UBERTO (*emphatically*)
Content!
A quart of burnt sack will recover us.
I am as cold as Christmas!
(*To Ricardo*) This stealing flesh
I' the frosty weather may be sweet i' the eating,
But sure the foresters have no great catch on't!
Shall's go?

RICARDO
Thou art the strangest lover of a tavern!
What shall we do there now? Lose the hour and ourselves too?

[1] *I.e.*, "of your rendezvous?"

UBERTO

Lose a pudding!
What dost thou talk o' the hour? Will one quart
muzzle us?
Have we not ears to hear, and tongues to ask
The drawers, but we must stand here like bawds
To watch the minutes?

SILVIO (*drawing Ricardo toward center*)

Prithee, content thyself!
We shall scout here as though we went a-haying,
And have some mangy prentice, that cannot sleep
For scratching, overhear us. Come, will you go, sirs?
(*As Ricardo stops, Silvio leaves him, center*)
When your love-fury is a little frozen
You'll come to us.
[*Crossing Pedro.*

RICARDO (*hesitating*)

Will you drink but one quart, then?

PEDRO

No more, i' faith.

SILVIO

Content!

RICARDO

Why then, have with you!
But let's be very watchful.

UBERTO

As watchful as the bellman! Come, I'll lead,
Because I hate good manners; they are too tedious.
[*They go out, into the tavern, Uberto first, then Ricardo and Silvio together, and Pedro last. Pause.*

Enter Viola from the house, right, with a key and a jewel casket. She shuts the door after her slowly, fearfully, and stands still.

VIOLA

The night is terrible, and I enclosed
In that my virtue and myself hate most,
Darkness; yet must I fear that which I wish, —
Some company; and every step I take
Sounds louder in my fearful ears to-night
Than ever did the shrill and sacred bell
That rang me to my prayers. The house will rise
When I lock the door again! Were it by day,
I am bold enough, — but then a thousand eyes
Warn me from going. Might not God have made
A time for envious, prying folk to sleep
Whilst lovers met, and yet the sun have shone?
Yet I was bold enough to steal this key
Out of my father's chamber; and dare yet
Venture upon mine enemy the night,
Arm'd only with my love, to meet my friend.
(*She cautiously locks the door*)
Alas, how valiant and how 'fraid at once
Love makes a virgin! I will throw the key
Back through the window. I have wealth enough
In jewels with me, if I hold his love
I steal 'em for! (*Glancing around for him, she steps out of sight, right, to throw the key in; returning immediately, crossing, but pausing at center and looking back*)
Farewell, my place of birth!
I never make account to look on thee again.
And if there be, as I have heard men say,
These household gods, I do beseech them, look
To this my charge: bless it from thieves and fire,
And keep till happily my love I win
Me from thy door and hold my father in!
[*She runs out, left. Darkness. The curtains part.*

Scene II

The Tavern room is seen, atmospherically lit with a glow from the fire, moonlight through the window, candles on the table, through *the* unlighted *fore-stage.*

A very young sleepy boy, the Drawer, stands in the background.

Ricardo sprawls seated on a stool down right-center, facing the window, his left hand on the table holding his mug.

Silvio sits behind him, facing front but with his aching head propped on his left elbow on the table, near his *mug.*

Pedro sprawls, befuddled, in the ingle-seat, right, mug in hand.

Uberto sits, pugnacious, under the window, facing Ricardo.

RICARDO

No more, for God's sake! . . . How's the night, boy?

DRAWER (*in a sleepy, treble drawl*)

Faith, sir, 'tis very late.

UBERTO

Faith, sir, you lie! Gi' us some more sack, you varlet.

RICARDO

Nay, if you love me, good Uberto, go!
I am monstrous hot with wine.

UBERTO

Quench it again with love!
(*He staggers to his feet*)
Gentlemen, I will drink one health more, and then,
If my legs say me not shamefully nay,
I will go with you. . . . Give me a singular quart!

DRAWER (*scuffling down to get his mug*)
Of what wine, sir?

UBERTO
Of sack, you that speak confusion at the bar!
Of sack, I say; and every one his quart!
What a devil, let's be merry!

DRAWER (*obediently going around, collecting the other three mugs too*) You shall, sir.
[*Exit, up-center.*

PEDRO (*aroused, roaring after him*)
We will, sir! And a dried tongue!

SILVIO (*aroused likewise, plaintively*)
And an olive, boy!
(*Comically*)
My head swims plaguily! 'Uds precious, I shall be claw'd!

[*He rocks his bowed head between his hands. Ricardo laughs vacantly, slipping lower in his seat. . . . He is warned up by the reëntrance of the Drawer with four quarts, which he distributes to Silvio, Pedro, Ricardo, and Uberto.*

RICARDO (*weakly*)
Pray, go! I can drink no more! Think on your promise!
(*Sees the moon through the window*)
'Tis midnight, gentlemen!

[*But he takes his mug, as the Drawer crosses him, to Uberto, and quietly withdraws up-stage between Uberto and the table, to his former stand.*

UBERTO (*grasping his mug, swaggering*)
Oh that it were dumb midnight now!
(*Bullying*) Not a word more:

Every man on 's knees and betake himself to his saint!

(*Clumsily kneels by his stool, waving his mug at Ricardo*)

Here's to your wench, signior! All this, and then away!

[*Pedro stands up and stolidly drinks his off at one draught. Silvio doesn't stir. Ricardo tries to drink, but sets it back on the table.*

RICARDO

I cannot drink it.

PEDRO

'Tis a toy, a toy; away wi 't!

UBERTO (*fiercely, and funnily, struggling to his feet*)

Now dare I speak anything to anybody living!
Come, where's the fault? Off with it!

[*Ricardo, overswayed, swallows some, and puts it back.*

RICARDO

I have broke my wind. Call you this sack? I wonder who made it. He was a sure workman, for 'tis plaguy strong work. Is — (*craning to see Silvio*) is it gone round?

[*Uberto sees that Silvio has not drunk, and starts up for him.*

UBERTO

'Tis at the last! Out of my way, good boy. . . .

(*The Drawer intercepts him, diverting his attention to the window*)

Is the moon up *yet?*

DRAWER

Yes, sir.

[*Uberto reels back against the table, staring up out the window.*

UBERTO

Where is she, boy?

DRAWER

There, sir.

UBERTO (*ominously*)

We shall have rain and thunder, boy.

DRAWER

When, sir?

UBERTO

I cannot tell; but sure we shall, boy.

[*He crosses and leans his forehead against a pane.*

DRAWER (*to Ricardo, with a sleepy smile*)

The gentleman is wine-wise.

UBERTO (*lurches*)

Drawer!

DRAWER

Here, sir.

[*Supports him, lets him down onto his stool again, and withdraws up-stage.*

UBERTO (*to Ricardo, tauntingly*)

It cannot sink in my head now that thou shouldst marry.

Why shouldst thou marry, tell me?

[*Ricardo jerks up, grabs his mug, and drains it.*

RICARDO (*coarsely*)

I marry? I'll be hang'd first! Some more wine, boy!

(*Swinging his mug back so that it grazes Silvio's head, which Silvio lifts*)

Signior Silvio, I shall scratch your head, —

Indeed I shall. . . .

(*To Uberto, vaguely*)

I am a little angry . . .

UBERTO

Oh, hang her! Shall we fall out for *her?*

RICARDO (*rising*)

I must beat the Watch; I have long'd for't any time this three weeks.

[*Pedro, who has leant back stiffly against the ingle-seat, starts up. Silvio, too, rises sillily and swaggers down to Ricardo's right.*

SILVIO

We'll beat the town too, an thou wilt. We are proof, boy!

(*With childish glee, in Ricardo's ear*)

Shall we kill anybody?

RICARDO (*earnestly*)

No, but we'll hurt 'em dangerously!

UBERTO (*rising; drolly bellicose*)

Silvio, now must I kill one: I cannot avoid it!

(*The Drawer, seeing them all up at last, has taken the candle from the table and shows them the door. Uberto reels up to him and leans on him*)

Boy, easily afore there with your candle!

(*Checking him in the doorway, forcing him round*)

Where's your mistress?

DRAWER

A-bed, sir.

[*Uberto passes him, out.*

SILVIO (*shouts from down right*)

With whom?

DRAWER

You are a merry gentleman.

(*To Pedro as he staggers out*)

There, sir: take hold!

[*Ricardo and Silvio, arm in arm, start up-stage as the curtains close.*

SCENE III

The front lights return, on The Street.
Enter Viola, up right.

VIOLA

This is the place! I have out-told the clock
For haste: he is not here. Ricardo! — No.
Now every power that loves and is beloved
Keep me from shame to-night! for all-you know
Each thought of mine is innocent and pure
As flesh and blood can hold. I cannot back:
I threw the key within, and ere I raise
My father up to see his daughter's shame
I'll set me down and tell the northern wind
That it is gentler than the curling west
If it will blow me dead. But he *will* come. . . .
I' faith, 'tis cold! . . . If he deceive me thus,
A woman will not easily trust a man. . . .
Hark, what's that?

SILVIO (*singing, off left*)

Thou'rt over long at thy pot, Tom, Tom, —
Thou'rt over long at thy pot, Tom.

VIOLA

Bless me, who's that?

PEDRO (*off left*)

Whooo!

UBERTO (*off left*)

There, boys!

VIOLA

Darkness, be thou my cover! I must fly.
(*She flees as far down right as possible, thus escaping the border-light and becoming almost a silhouette*)
To thee I haste for help.
(*Enter the Four; and the Drawer, almost asleep, after them, with his candle guttering*)
They have a light!
Wind, if thou lovest a virgin, blow it out! —
And I will never shut a window more
To keep thee from me.

RICARDO (*with Silvio, foremost of the Four*)
Boy!

DRAWER (*far behind, piping up dazedly*)
Sir?

RICARDO (*turning, center, and yelling back*)
Why, boy!

DRAWER
What say you, sir?

RICARDO (*stamping*)
Why, boy! — art thou drunk, boy?

DRAWER (*waking up*)
What would you, sir?
[*He hurries, and his candle goes out.*

RICARDO
Why, very good! Where are we?

UBERTO (*down left*)
Ay, that's the point.

DRAWER
Why, sir, you will be at your lodging presently.

RICARDO
I'll go to no lodging, boy!

DRAWER (*despairingly*)
Whither will you go, then, sir?

RICARDO
I'll go no farther.
[*He sits down just where he is.*

DRAWER
For the Lord's sake, sir, do not stay here all night!

RICARDO (*getting painfully up again*)
No more I will not!

SILVIO (*on Ricardo's right, sings as above*)
Thou'rt over long at thy pot, Tom, Tom, —
Thou'rt over long at thy pot, Tom!

VIOLA (*front, through the quavering ditty*)
That is Ricardo. What a noise they make!
It is ill done of 'em! — Here, sirs! Ricardo!
[*At her soft call Ricardo starts, loses his balance, and is supported by the Drawer on his left.*

RICARDO
What's that, boy?

DRAWER
'Tis a wench, sir. Pray, gentlemen, come away.
[*He tries to draw Ricardo up-stage as Viola cautiously approaches.*

VIOLA
Oh, my dear love, how dost thou?

RICARDO (*maudlin*)
Faith, sweetheart,
Even as thou seest.

UBERTO (*blustering, to the Drawer*)
Where's thy wench?

VIOLA
Speak softly, for the love of Heaven!

DRAWER

Mistress, get you gone, and do not entice the gentlemen now you see they're drunk, — or I'll call the Watch, and lay you fast enough!

VIOLA

Alas, what are you, or what do you mean? Sweet love, where's the place?

RICARDO

Marry, sweet love, e'en here!

[*Lurches forward and seizes her. Silvio ambles down right, observing her. Pedro comes slowly, stiffly, heavily down behind them.*

VIOLA

Good God, what mean you?

PEDRO

I will have the wench!

UBERTO (*bristling*)

If you can get her!

[*But the Drawer prevents his bellicose approach.*

PEDRO (*on Viola's right, laying hands on her possessively, to Ricardo*)

Let go the wench.

SILVIO (*suddenly seizing Pedro's right arm and flinging him off her*)

Let you go the wench!

VIOLA (*trembling in their midst*)

Oh, gentlemen, as you had mothers —

UBERTO

They had no mothers: they are sons of bitches!

RICARDO (*drops Viola and swings on Uberto, his hand on his sword-hilt*)

Let that be maintained!

SILVIO (*laughing*)
Marry, then —

VIOLA
Oh, bless me, Heaven!

UBERTO (*greedily, trying to draw his sword*)
How many is there on 's?

RICARDO
About five.

UBERTO
Why, then, let's fight three to three!

SILVIO (*merrily*)
Content!

[*He draws, gets the sword between his legs, trips and falls down. Pedro has with difficulty extricated* his *sword, and is wildly stabbing at Silvio, nowhere near him. The Drawer raises the alarm, running, calling, off, up left.*

DRAWER
The Watch! The Watch! The Watch! Where are you? (*Exit*)

[*His shouts distract Ricardo, who pursues him part way.*

RICARDO
Where are these cowards?

VIOLA (*left alone, center*)
I never saw a drunken man before,
But these, I think, are so.

SILVIO (*as Pedro's sword pricks him*)
Oh!

[*He scrambles to his feet and they engage.*
Uberto and Ricardo also engage.
Viola, much frightened, draws up-stage between them.

PEDRO (*panting*)

I missed you narrowly there!

VIOLA

My state is such I know not how to think
A prayer fit for me: only I could move
That never maiden more might be in love!

[*She runs off, right.*

THE CONSTABLE (*outside, left*)

Where are they, boy?

[*The running of the Watch is audible.*

DRAWER (*off, left; running beside him*)

Make no such haste, sir: they are no runners.

[*Ricardo, lunging at Uberto, hits his thigh. He whirls back, against Pedro.*

The Drawer runs on, followed by the Constable and Watch with lanthorns and pikes.

UBERTO

I am hurt, but that's all one: I shall light upon some of ye!
Pedro, thou'rt a tall gentleman; — let me kiss thee.

[*The foremost Watchman claps a hand on his shoulder.*

WATCHMAN

My friend —

UBERTO (*flings him off*)

Your friend? You lie!

RICARDO (*backing down left, dazed*)

Stand further off!—The Watch? You are full of fleas!

[*Pedro loses his balance and falls like a tall tree. Silvio and Uberto roar!*

CONSTABLE

Gentlemen, either be quiet, or we must make you quiet!

RICARDO

Nay, good Master Constable, be not so rigorous!

DRAWER (*to Pedro, as he sits up bewildered*)

Now you are up, sir, will you go to bed?

PEDRO (*lying down again*)

I'll truckle here, boy. Give me another pillow.

DRAWER (*winking at the Watch*)

Will you stand up and let me lay it on, then?

PEDRO

Yes.

[*The Drawer and two Watchmen help him to his feet. Others help the other three to sheathe their swords.*

DRAWER

There, hold him, two of ye. Now they are up, be going, Master Constable.

[*The four, their swords safely scabbarded, sing.*

RICARDO

And this way and that way, Tom!

UBERTO

And here away and there away, Tom!

SILVIO

This is the right way, t'other's the wrong.

PEDRO (*deep bass*)

Th'other's the wrong!

ALL

Thou'rt over long at thy pot, Tom, Tom!

[*Then they consent to be led, up right.*

RICARDO

Lead valiantly, sweet constable! Whoop, ha, boys!

CONSTABLE

This wine hunts in their heads!

RICARDO (*grabbing a "bill" from the nearest watchman*)

Give me the bill, for I will be the sergeant.

[*Nearly trips over it.*

CONSTABLE

Look to him, sirs!

RICARDO (*parading alongside with his halberd, as though keeping order — the furthest down-stage and the last man off*)

Keep your ranks, you rascals, keep your ranks!

[*Exeunt.*

Darkness. Pause. The curtains part, but the inner lights go up very slowly and dimly on

Scene IV

In the Country.

The Tinker and his Trull are asleep under the tree, center. It is too dark to see them as anything but shapes. Viola enters from somewhere in the dark background, and comes down wearily to before the tree: then speaks.

VIOLA

What fear have I endured this dismal night!
And what disgrace if I were seen and known! —
In which this darkness only is my friend
That only has undone me. A thousand curses
Light on my easy, foolish, childish love
That durst so lightly lay a confidence
Upon a man, so many being false! . . .
My weariness and weeping makes me sleepy:
I must lie down.

[*Sits, carefully, against the tree-trunk. Then the Tinker, left, suddenly and gruffly speaks, startling her.*

TINKER

What's this? A prayer, or a homily, or a ballad of good counsel? (*Feeling her all over*) She has a gown, I'm sure!

TRULL (*right; snarls*)

Knock out her brains, and then she'll never bite!

TINKER

Yes, I will knock her, but not yet. — You, woman!

VIOLA (*trembling, but helpless between them*)

For God's sake, what are you?

TINKER (*grinning in the dark*)

One of the grooms of your wardrobe! Come, uncase, uncase! (*Pulls off her mantle*) By'r Lady, a good kersey!

[*Stands up, and is better seen.*

VIOLA

Pray, do not hurt me, sir!

TRULL (*shrilly, in her ear, showing her a gleaming knife*)

Let's have no "pity!"[1] If you do, here's that shall cut your whistle!

VIOLA

Alas, what would you have? I am as miserable as you can make me, any way.

TRULL (*sheathing the knife; wickedly*)

That shall be tried.

VIOLA

Here, take my *gown*, if that will do you pleasure!

TINKER

Yes, marry, will't! Look in the pockets, Doll. There may be birds.

[*The Trull searches Viola's pockets.*

[1] *I.e.*, begging for pity.

TRULL

They are flown, a pox go with 'em!
(*But as she starts up, she grabs off Viola's hat and ruff, and stands trying them on in the growing light*)
I'll have this hat, and this ruff, too: I like it.
(*Exhibiting*)
Now will I flourish like a lady, brave,
I' faith, boy!

VIOLA (*with sweet irony*)

By my truth, I could live with you, —
You are so gentle people!

TINKER (*yanking her to her feet*)

Could you so?
(*Holding her off and examining her*)
A pretty, round, young wench, well-blooded! I am for her!

TRULL

But, by this, I am not!
[*She wrenches Viola from him.*

VIOLA

Good woman, do not hurt me! I am sorry
That I have given any cause of anger.
[*But the Trull bares her knife and, holding it at Viola's throat, addresses the Tinker.*

TRULL

Either bind her quickly and come away, or by
This steel I'll tell, though I truss for company!
(*Savagely at Viola*)
Now could I eat her broiled or any way!

TINKER

Put up your cutpurse! An I take my switch up
'Twill be a black time with you!

TRULL

Will you bind her?
Or shall we stand here prating, and be hang'd both?

[*The Tinker takes up a rope at his feet and proceeds to bind Viola to the tree.*

TINKER

Come, I must bind you. Not a word: no crying!

VIOLA

Do what you will, indeed I will not cry!

[*The Trull sneers and threatens her.*

TINKER

Hurt her not! (*Driving the Trull off right, with his tinkering tools*) If thou dost, — by ale and beer
I'll clout thy old bald brain-pan with a piece
Of brass, you bitch incarnate! (*Exeunt*)

[*The lights now begin to brighten to sunrise.*

VIOLA

O God, to what am I reserved, that knew not
Through all my childish hours and actions
More sin than poor imagination
And too much loving of a faithless man, —
For which I am paid! — and so, that not the day
That now is rising to protect the harmless
And give the innocent a sanctuary
From thieves and spoilers, can deliver me
From shame — at least, suspicion!

[*Enter Valerio by the fore-stage, right.*

VALERIO (*calling off behind him*)

Sirrah, lead down
The horses easily! (*Looking up*) 'Tis very early:
I shall reach home betimes. — How now, who's there?

[*Perceiving Viola, he stops short, amazed.*

VIOLA (*covering her face even as she speaks*)
Night, that was ever friend to lovers, yet
Has raised some weary soul that hates his bed
To come and see me blush and then laugh at me.

VALERIO (*doubtfully approaching*)
He had a rude heart that did this.

VIOLA (*putting out her hands to him in entreaty*)
Gentle sir,
If you have that which honest men call pity
And be as far from evil as you show, —
Help a poor maid that this night by bad fortune
Has been thus used by robbers!
[*This assures him she is no decoy; but he sooner becomes indignant at the wrong, than helpful to her.*

VALERIO
A pox upon his heart that would not help thee!
Where were the Watch the while? Good sober gentlemen,
Drawing in diligent ale, and singing catches
While Master Constable contrived the toasts!
If they had every one two eyes a-piece more,
(*as he goes behind to untie her*)
Three pots would put them out!

VIOLA (*drooping*)
I cannot tell.
I found no Christian to give me succor!

VALERIO
When they take a thief, I'll take Ostend again!
(*Finishes untying her*)
Now let me know to whom I have done this courtesy,
That I may thank my early rising for it.
[*Coming down on her left.*

VIOLA

Sir, all I am, you see.

VALERIO

You have a name, and kindred, I am sure, —
A father, friend, or something that must own you.
(*Viola covers her face, and moves away, right*)
(*Aside*) She's a handsome young wench. What rogues were these to rob her!

VIOLA (*turning, right center*)

Sir, you see all I dare reveal; and as
You are a gentleman, press me no further!
For there begins a grief whose bitterness
Will break a stronger heart than I have in me,
And 'twill but make you heavy with the hearing.
For your own goodness' sake, desire it not!

VALERIO

If you would not have me inquire that,
How do you live, then?

VIOLA

How I have lived is still
One question which must not be resolved.
How I desire to live, is in your liking, —
So worthy an opinion I have of you.

VALERIO

Is in my liking? How, I pray thee? Tell me!
(*Approaching her, wondering if he can safely make free with her*)
I' faith, I'll do you any good lies in my power.
(*She withdraws instinctively from him*)
(*Aside*) She has an eye would raise a bed-rid man! —
Come, leave your fear and tell me, that's a good wench!
[*Close to her now.*

VIOLA

Sir, I would serve —

VALERIO

Who wouldst thou serve? Do not weep,
And tell me.

VIOLA (*bravely, looking up*)

Faith, sir, even some good woman;
And such a wife, if you be married, I do
Imagine yours.

VALERIO

Alas, thou art young and tender!
Let me see thy hand: this was ne'er made to wash,
Or wind up water, beat clothes, or rub a floor!
(*Aside*)
'Tis the best wanton hand that e'er I looked on!

VIOLA

Dare you accept me, sir? My heart is honest.

VALERIO (*aside*)

I'll have her, though I keep her with main strength,
Like a besieged town, for I know I shall have
The enemy afore me within a week.

[*Viola begins to fear he will not help her.*

VIOLA

Sir, I can sew, too, and make pretty laces.

VALERIO

Pretty young maid, you shall serve a good gentlewoman.
(*Aside*) I like her better still!

VIOLA

I am the happier.

VALERIO (*aside*)

I'll work her as I go: I know she's wax!

[*Puts his arm around her waist.*

VIOLA

Sir, for this gentleness may Heaven requite you tenfold!

VALERIO

Come, pretty soul, we now are near our home,
And whilst our horses are walked down the hill
Let thou and I walk here over this close.
The footway is more pleasant. 'Tis a time,
(*as they take a step or two left*)
My pretty one, not to be wept away, —
For every living thing is full of love.
Art thou not so too, ha?
[*Lightly squeezing her waist.*

VIOLA

Nay, there are living things
Empty of love, or I had not been here;
But for myself, alas, I have too much.

VALERIO

It cannot be (*in mock protest, stopping*)
That so much beauty, so much youth and grace,
Should have too much of love.

VIOLA

Pray, what *is* love?
For I am full of that I do not know.

VALERIO

Why, love, fair maid, is an extreme desire
That's not to be examined, but fulfilled.
To ask the reason why thou art in love,
Or what might be the noblest end in love,
Would overthrow that kindly rising warmth
That many times slides gently o'er the heart;
'Twould make thee grave and staid, thy thoughts would be
Like a thrice-married widow, full of ends

And void of all compassion; and, to fright thee
From such inquiry, whereas thou art now
Mild, fresh, and sweet, and but sixteen,
The knowing what love is would make thee six-and-forty!

VIOLA

Would it would make me nothing! I have heard
Scholars affirm the world's upheld by love,
But I believe women maintain all this
For there's no love in men.

VALERIO (*ogling*)

Yes, in some men.

VIOLA

I know them not.

VALERIO

Why, there is love in me.

VIOLA

There's charity, I am sure, towards me.

VALERIO

And love, —
Which I will now express. My pretty maid,
I dare not bring thee home: my wife is foul
And therefore envious; she is very old,
And therefore jealous; thou art fair and young,
A subject fit for her unlucky vices
To work upon; she never will endure thee.

VIOLA

She may endure,
If she be aught but devil, all the friendship
That I will hold with you. Can she endure
I should be thankful to you? May I pray
For you and her? Will she be brought to think
That all the honest industry I have
Deserves brown bread? If this may be endured,

She'll pick a quarrel with a sleeping child
Ere she fall out with me.

VALERIO

But trust me, she doth hate all handsomeness.

VIOLA

How fell you in love with such a creature?

VALERIO

I never loved her.

VIOLA

And yet married her?

VALERIO

She was a rich one.

VIOLA

And you swore, I warrant you,
She was a fair one then too?

VALERIO

Or, believe me,
I think I had not had her.

VIOLA

Are you men
All such? Would you would wall us in a place
Where all we women that are innocent
Might live together!
[*Turns back from him, weeping.*

VALERIO

Do not weep at this.
Although I dare not, for a weighty reason,
Displease my wife, yet I'll forget not thee.

VIOLA

What will you do with me?

VALERIO

Thou shalt be placed
At my man's house, and have such food and raiment

As can be bought with money. These white hands
(*snatching them both*)
Shall never learn to work, but they shall play —
[*Fondling them.*

VIOLA

I thank you, sir; but pray you, clothe me poorly,
And let my labor get me means to live!

VALERIO

But, fair one, you, I know, do so much hate
A foul ingratitude, you will not look
I should do this for nothing.

VIOLA (*surprised*)

I will work
As much out as I can, and take as little;
And that you shall have as duly paid to you
As ever servant did.

VALERIO

But give me now
A trial of it, that I may believe!
We are alone: show me how thou wilt kiss
And hug me, hard, when I have stolen away
From my too-clamorous wife that watches me,
To spend a blessëd hour or two with thee!

VIOLA

Is this the love you mean? You would have that
(*with growing comprehension and horror*)
Is not in me to give; you would have lust.

VALERIO

Not to dissemble, or to mince the word,
(*nodding at her, smiling seductively*)
'Tis lust I wish indeed.

VIOLA (*vehemently*)

And by my troth
I have it not! (*Valerio freezes*) —

For Heaven's sake, use me kindly, —
Though I *be* good, and show perhaps a monster[1]
As this world goes!

VALERIO (*coldly, frankly*)

I do but speak to thee;
Thy answers are thy own. (*Virtuously*) I compel none.
(*Pause*)
But if thou refuse this motion, thou art not then for me.
(*She looks desperate*)
Alas, good soul, what profit can thy work bring me?

VIOLA

But I fear. I pray, go! For lust, they say, will grow
Outrageous, being denied! I give you thanks
For all your courtesies, and there's a jewel
(*pulling out the little casket from the depths of her kirtle, opening it, and offering him one*)
That's worth the taking, that I did preserve
Safe from the robbers. Pray you, leave me here
Just as you found me, a poor innocent,
And Heaven will bless you for it!

VALERIO

Pretty maid,
I am no robber, nor no ravisher.
I pray thee keep thy jewel. I have done
No wrong to thee. Though thou be'st virtuous
And in extremity, I do not know
That I am bound to keep thee.

VIOLA

No, sir. —
(*Wildly*)
For God's sake, if you know an honest man

[1] *I.e.*, of ingratitude.

In all these countries, give me some direction
To find him out!

VALERIO

More honest than myself,
Good sooth, I do not know. I would have lain
With thee, with thy consent; and who would not
In all these parts, is past my memory!
I am sorry for thee. Farewell, gentle maid.
God keep thee safe!

VIOLA

I thank you, sir!
(*He goes off, left, without looking back. She glares after him*) —And you!
Woman, they say, was only made of man:
Methinks 'tis strange they should be so unlike!
It may be, all the best was cut away
To make the woman, and the naught[1] was left
Behind with him. — I'll sit me down and weep!
(*Backing up and sitting under the tree again*)
All things have cast me from 'em, but the earth.
When evening comes, then every little flower
Will droop, as well as I.

[*Enter two Milkmaids, with full pails, by the fore-stage, right.*

NAN

Good Madge, let's rest a little; by my troth,
I am weary. This new pail is a plaguy heavy one.
[*They sit, down right-center.*

VIOLA

What true contented happiness dwells here,
More than in cities! Would to God my father
Had lived like one of these, and bred me up

[1] *I.e.*, the bad.

To milk, and do as they do! Methinks it is
A life that I would choose, if I were now
To tell my time again, above a prince's.
(*She gets up and approaches them*)
Maids, for charity give a poor wench one draught of milk,
That weariness and hunger have nigh famished!

NAN

If I had but one cow's milk in all the world
You should have some of it. There! Drink more.
[*Viola drinks from the pail.*

MADGE

Do you dwell hereabouts?

VIOLA

No; would I did.

NAN

Madge, if she do not look like my cousin Sue
O' the Moor-lane, as one thing can look like another!
[*Viola drinks again, longer.*

MADGE

Nay, Sue has a hazel eye; I know Sue well;
And, by your leave, not so trim a body, neither.

NAN

She laces close, by the mass, I warrant you, and so does Sue too.

VIOLA

I thank you for your gentleness, fair maids.

NAN

Drink again, pray thee!

VIOLA

I am satisfied, and Heaven reward thee for't!
Yet thus far I'll compel you, to accept
(*opening the casket and taking two pins out*)

These trifles, toys only, that express my thanks,
For greater worth I am sure they have not in them.
(*They protest*)
Indeed you shall; I found them as I came.
[*Forces the pins into their hands.*

NAN

Madge, look you here, Madge!

MADGE

Nay, I have as fine a one as you! Mine is all gold, and painted, and a precious stone in't. I warrant it cost a crown, wench!

NAN

But mine is the most sumptuous one that e'er I saw!

VIOLA

One favor you must do me more, for you are well acquainted here.

NAN

Indeed, we'll do you any kindness, sister.

VIOLA

Only to send me to some honest place
Where I may find a service.

NAN

'Uds me, our Dorothy went away but last week,
And I know my mistress wants a maid, and why
May she not be placed there?

MADGE

We will prefer her.
Hark you, sister! Pray what's your name?

VIOLA

Melvia.

NAN

A feat name, i' faith! And can you milk a cow?

VIOLA

I shall learn quickly.

NAN

And dress a house with flowers?

VIOLA

I hope I shall.

NAN (*rising*)

Come, you shall e'en home with us,
And be our fellow. We serve a very good woman, and a gentlewoman; and we live as merrily, and dance o' good days after evensong. Our wake shall be on Sunday. Do you know what a wake is? We have mighty cheer then. (*Rallying her, for she is mute with pleased surprise*) You must not be so bashful, you'll spoil all!

MADGE

Let's home, for God's sake.
(*Lifting her pail*)
My mistress thinks by this time we are lost.
Come, we'll have a care of you, I warrant you.
But you must tell my mistress where you were born
And everything that belongs to you, and the strangest things
You can devise, for she loves those extremely.
'Tis no matter whether they be true or no, —
She's not so scrupulous. You must be our sister
And love us best, and tell us everything. Will you do this?

VIOLA (*smiling through happy tears*)

Yes.

NAN

Then home again, o' God's name! Can you go apace?

VIOLA

I warrant you. (*Exeunt, left*)

[*Darkness. The curtains close. Possibly the front curtain could fall here, and an interval ensue.*

Scene V

Daylight brightens, on the Street once more.

Enter Ricardo, right: disordered, distraught, violent with remorse.

RICARDO

Am I not mad? Can this weak-tempered head
That will be mad with drink endure the wrong
That I have done a virgin and my love?
(*Beating his forehead*)
Be mad, for so thou oughtst, or I will beat
The walls and trees down with thee, and will let
Either thy memory out or madness in!
But sure I never loved fair Viola,
I never loved my father, nor my mother,
Nor any thing but drink!

[*He stands, abject, center.*

Enter Pedro, Silvio, and Uberto, right, and come down to him.

PEDRO

Good morrow, sir.

RICARDO (*gravely*)

Good morrow, gentlemen.
(*Gestures toward the tavern-door, left*)
Shall we go drink again? I have my wits.

PEDRO

So have I, but they are unsettled ones. Would I had some porridge!

RICARDO

The tavern-boy was here this morning with me
And told me that there was a gentlewoman,
Whom he took for a whore, that hung on me,
For whom we quarreled, and I know not what!

PEDRO

I' faith, nor I.

UBERTO (*down right, caressing his bandaged leg*)

I have a glimmering
Of some such thing.

RICARDO (*ironically, at Uberto's "glimmering"*)

Was it *you*, Silvio,
That made me drink so much? 'Twas you or Pedro.

PEDRO

I know not who.

SILVIO

We were all apt enough.

RICARDO

But I will lay the fault on none but me,
That I would be so entreated! — Come, Silvio,
(*catching his arm*)
Shall we go drink again? Come, gentlemen,
Why do you stay? Let's never leave off now
While we have wine and throats! I'll practise it
Till I have made it my best quality, —
For what is best for me to do but that?!
For God's sake, come and drink! When I am named,
Men shall make answer, "Which Ricardo mean you?
The excellent drinker?" I will have it so.
Will you go drink?

SILVIO

We drunk too much too lately.

RICARDO

Why, there is then the less behind to drink!
Let's end it all, and never think of those
That love us best, more than we did last night!
(*He suddenly, frenziedly clasps his temples and cries out madly*)

I keep my wits still, like a frozen man
That has no fire within him!

SILVIO

Nay, good Ricardo!

PEDRO

Is it flattery, to tell you you *are* mad?

RICARDO

"Ricardo, thou *art* mad!" It pleases me,
And makes me think that I had virtue in me,
That I had love and tenderness of heart;
That though I have committed such a fault
As never creature did, yet running mad
As honest men should do for such a crime
I have expressed some worth, though it be late!

SILVIO

Leave this wild talk and send a letter to her.
I will deliver it.

[*With a gesture toward the door, right.*

RICARDO

'Tis to no purpose.
Perhaps she's lost, last night; or if she *is*
Got home again, she's now so strictly looked to
The wind can scarce come to her! Or, admit
She were herself's, if she would hear from me,
From me unworthy, that have used her thus, —
She were so foolish that she were no more
To be beloved!

[*Enter Andrugio, up right, and crosses, not seeing them, in anxiety. When he is almost across, enter after him his Servant with Viola's mantle.*

SERVANT (*running left to him*)

Sir, we have found this mantle
She took with her.

ANDRUGIO (*turning, dropping down left*)
Where?
RICARDO (*turning too, dropping right, loudly*)
Where? Where? Speak quickly!
SERVANT
We searched, and found a tinker and his dell
That had it in a tap-house, and confessed
They stole it from her.
RICARDO (*drawing*)
And murdered her?!
SILVIO
What ails you, man?
[*Restrains him.*
RICARDO (*frantically*)
Why, *all this* doth not make
Me mad!
SILVIO
It does; you would not offer this else.
Good Pedro, look to his sword!
[*Pedro takes the sword.*
SERVANT (*to Andrugio but with some attention to Ricardo too*) They do deny
The killing of her, but swore they left her tied
To a tree, in the fields without our lady's gate,
Near day, and by the road, so that some passenger
Must needs untie her quickly.
ANDRUGIO
The will of Heaven be done!
(*To Ricardo*) Sir, I will only
Entreat you this, — that as you were the greatest
Occasion of her loss, that you'll be pleased
To urge your friends, and yourself be earnest in
The search of her. If she be found, she is yours,

If *she* please. I myself only will see
These people better examined, and after, follow
Some way in search. God keep you, gentlemen.
[*Exit, up right; the Servant after him.*

SILVIO

Alas, good man!

RICARDO

What think ye now of me,
Without a soul? For where there's so much spirit
As would but warm a flea, those faults of mine
Would make it glow and flame in this dull heart
And run like molten gold through every sin
Till it could burst these walls and fly away! —
Shall I entreat you all to take your horses
And search this innocent?

PEDRO

With all our hearts!

RICARDO

Give me my sword, good Pedro! I will do
No harm, believe me, with it; I'll follow, too,
But never to return till she be found!
God keep you all and send us good success!
[*Exeunt Ricardo and Pedro left; Uberto and Silvio right. Pause.*

Scene VI

The curtains slowly part, on the Country, with lights from the other, right, side.

Enter within the inner proscenium Pedro and Silvio, meeting under the tree.

PEDRO

How now, — any good news yet?

SILVIO

Faith, not any yet.

PEDRO

This comes o' tippling! Would 'twere treason, an't please God, to drink more than three draughts at a meal!

SILVIO

When did you see Ricardo?

PEDRO

I crossed him twice to-day.

SILVIO

You've heard of a young wench that was seen last night?

PEDRO

Yes.

SILVIO

Has Ricardo heard of this?

PEDRO

Yes, and I think he's ridden after. Farewell! I'll have another round.

SILVIO

If you hear anything, pray spare no horseflesh! I will do the like.

PEDRO

Do. *(Exeunt, crossing each other)*

[Enter, slowly, from the background, Valerio and Ricardo.

VALERIO

This is the place where I did leave the maid
Alone this morning, drying her tender eyes,
Uncertain what to do, and yet desirous
To have me gone.

[*As though still a little surprised at her attitude, — yet thankful, now, that he did not win his wish. He has passed through, down onto the fore-stage.*

RICARDO (*pausing under the tree*)

How rude are all we men
That take the name of civil to ourselves!
If she had set her foot upon an earth
Where people live that we call barbarous,
Though they had had no house to bring her to
They would have spoiled the glory that the Spring
Has decked the trees in, and with willing hands
Have torn their branches down; and every man
Would have become a builder for her sake.
What time left you her here?

[*Going down toward Valerio, down left-center.*

VALERIO

I left her when the sun was so much risen
As he has now got to his place of setting.

RICARDO

She could not wander far! (*Calls*) Fair Viola!

VALERIO

It is in vain to call; she sought a house,
Beyond all question.

RICARDO

Peace! — Fair Viola!!
Fair Viola! (*Turns on Valerio*) *Who* would have left her here
On such a ground? If you had meant to lose her
You might have found there were no echoes here
To take her name and carry it about
When her true lover came to mourn for her,
Till all the neighboring valleys and the hills
Resounded Viola, — and such a place

You should have chose! Could any but a rogue
That had despised humanity and goodness,
God, law, and credit, and had set himself
To lose his noblest part and be a beast,
Have left so innocent, unmatched a virtue
To the rude mercy of a wilderness?
(*Valerio is very indignant at this: with a scathing glance he starts off, left. Ricardo stops him*)
Pray weigh my words no farther, I beseech you,
Than a mere madness!—for such grief has seized me,
So strong and deadly, as a punishment,
And a just one too,
That 'tis a greater wonder I am living
Than anything I utter. Yet, let me tell you
This much: it was a fault, your leaving her
So in the fields.

VALERIO (*appeased, civilly*)
Sir, I will think so now;
And credit me, you have wrought me with your grief.
If you will please to take a bed this night, here —
[*With a gesture toward left — his house.*

RICARDO
I thank you, no! Shall I be so unworthy
To think upon a bed, or ease, or comfort, —
And have my *heart* stray from me, God knows where,
Cold and forsaken, destitute of friends
And all good comforts else, unless some tree
Whose speechless charity must better ours,
With which the bitter east winds made their sport
And sung through hourly, hath invited her
To keep off half a day? Shall she be thus,
And I draw in soft slumbers? God forbid!

No; night and bitter coldness, I provoke thee
(*wandering with up-thrust chest toward right*)
And all the dews that hang upon thy locks
And two-edged winds that prime the maiden blossoms! —
[*Interrupts himself, stops, and turns, right.*

VALERIO

Will you then come and eat with me?

RICARDO

You are angry with me; I know you're angry;
You would not bid me "eat" else. — My poor mistress, —
(*wandering up to the tree*)
For aught I know, thou art famished; for what else
Can the fields yield thee, and the stubborn season
That yet holds in the fruit? — Good gentle sir,
(*coming down to Valerio again*)
Think not ill manners in me for denying
Your offered meat! For sure I cannot eat
While I do think *she wants.* — Well, I'm a rascal,
(*flinging center*)
A villain, slave, that only was begotten
To murder women, and of them the best.

VALERIO

This is a strange affliction! If you will
Accept no greater courtesy, yet drink, sir.

RICARDO (*very intensely*)

Now I am sure you hate me. An you knew
What kind of man I am — as indeed 'tis fit
That every man *should* know me, to avoid me, —
Name that abhor'd word "drink" *no more!*
You had safer strike me.

VALERIO

Why, sir, what ails you?

RICARDO (*violently*)

I hate drink, there's the end on't!

VALERIO

Upon my credit, you shall see no drink.

[*Ricardo flares up at the word in a kind of spasm!*

RICARDO

The hearing of it makes me giddy!
I shall be mad!

VALERIO (*goes to him, soothing him*)

I pray, no more of that.

[*Ricardo seizes on him, speaks softly but wildly*

RICARDO

Will you go with me to travel? To search the earth
Till we have found two in the shapes of men
As wicked as ourselves?

VALERIO (*drawing back, with dignity*)

'Twere not so hard
To find out those.

RICARDO (*keeping at him, villainously*)

Why, if we find them out,
It were the better; for what brave villainy
Might we four do?! We should not keep together,
For every one has treachery enough
For twenty countries: one should trouble Asia,
Another should sow strife in Africa, —
But *you* should play the knave at home in Europe.
And for America, let *me* alone!

[*Lets him go, grinning naughtily.*

VALERIO

Sir, I am honester (*with great, chilling superiority*)
Than you know how to be; and can no more
Be wronged, but I shall find myself a right.

RICARDO

If you had any spark of honesty
(*with a smile of despair*)
You would not think that *honester than I*
Were a praise enough to serve your turn!
If men were commonly so bad as I,
Thieves would be put in calendars for saints
And bones of murderers would work miracles.
I am a kind of knave, of knave so much
There is betwixt me and the vilest else —
(*Leaves the sentence unfinished, but springs at Valerio venomously*)
But the next place of all to mine is yours!

[*Valerio retires 'way down left, Ricardo after him. From left, within the inner proscenium, enter Viola, Nan, and Madge, with pails, empty. They cross, toward right, — Viola last.*

VALERIO (*turning for a parting shot at Ricardo, catches sight of them*)

That last is she! 'tis she!

[*The girls turn, center, and stare.*

RICARDO (*in genuine terror, hiding his face from Viola*)

Let us away;
(*Hastening across, along the footlights*)
We shall infect her! Let her have the wind,
And we will kneel down here.

[*Kneels, facing front, far down right. Valerio, however, goes up to Viola.*

VIOLA

Wenches, away!
For here are men.

[*But Nan and Madge stare at Ricardo, and Viola recognizes him!*

VALERIO (*at Viola's left*)
Fair maid, I pray you stay.
[*Takes hold of her arm.*
VIOLA (*frightened and distracted*)
Alas! again?
RICARDO (*turning, at her cry*)
Why do you lay hold on her?
I pray heartily, let her go.
[*Viola's face shines for him. Valerio steps back.*
VALERIO
With all my heart. I do not mean to hurt her.
RICARDO
But stand away, then! for the purest bodies
Will soonest take infection; stand away!
(*Rises from his knees*)
But for infecting her myself, by Heaven,
I would come there and *beat* thee further off!
VIOLA
I know that voice and face!
[*Contending emotions rock her.*
VALERIO
You are finely mad!
God b' wi' ye, sir! Now you are here together
I'll leave you so. God send you good luck, both!
When you are soberer, you'll give me thanks.
[*Exit, fore-stage left.*
MADGE
Wilt thou go milk? Come.
[*Plucking her sleeve.*
NAN
Why dost not come?
MADGE
She nods; she's asleep.

NAN

What, wert up so early?

[*Ricardo kneels, trembling.*

MADGE

I think yon man's mad, to kneel there.

(*To Viola*) Nay, come, come away.— Uds body, Nan, help! she looks black i' the face; she's in a swoon!

[*Viola faints, center, Madge supporting her and Nan darting behind her to her left, stooping over her, then rising.*

NAN (*to Ricardo*)

An you be a man, come hither, and help a woman.

RICARDO

Come thither? You are a fool.

NAN

And you a knave and a beast, that you are!

[*Stoops again to tend Viola, with Madge.*

RICARDO

Come thither? — 'twas my being now so near
That made her swoon; and you are wicked people,
Or you would do so too. My venom eyes
Strike innocency dead at such a distance.
Here will I kneel, for this is out of distance.

NAN (*looking up, tartly*)

Thou art a prating ass! There's no goodness in thee,
I'll warrant! (*To Viola*) How dost thou?

[*Viola recovers, sits up, against the tree.*

VIOLA

Why, well.

MADGE

Art thou able to go?

VIOLA

No; pray, go you and milk. If I be able to come, I'll follow you. If not, I'll sit here till you come back.

[*Madge picks up the pails. Nan hesitates.*

NAN

I am loth to leave thee here with yon wild fool.

VIOLA

I know him well. I warrant thee he will not hurt me.

[*Wanly smiling up to her.*

MADGE

Come then, Nan.

[*Exeunt Milkmaids, inner-stage right.*

Pause.

RICARDO

How do you? Be not fearful, for I hold
My hands before my mouth and speak, and so
My breath can never blast you.

VIOLA

'Twas enough
To use me ill though you had never sought me
To mock me too. Why kneel you so far off?
Were not that gesture better used in prayer?
Had I dealt so with you, I should not sleep
Till God and you had both forgiven me.

RICARDO

I do not mock; nor lives there such a villain
That can do anything contemptible [1]
To *you:* but I do kneel, because it is
An action very fit and reverent
In presence of so pure a creature,

[1] *I.e.*, mocking.

And so far off as fearful to offend
One too much wronged already.
[*Viola takes heart, and rises.*

VIOLA (*warmly*)

You confess you did the fault, yet scorn to come
So far as hither to ask pardon for it?
Which I could willingly afford to come
To you to grant. . . . Good sir, if you have
A better love, may you be bless'd together!
She shall not wish you better than I will.
(*Ricardo, head bowed, shudders*)
I but offend you! There are all the jewels
(*throwing down the casket*)
I stole; and all the love I ever had
I leave behind with you; I'll carry none
To give another. May the next maid you try
Love you no worse, nor be no worse, than I!

RICARDO

Do not leave me yet, for all my fault!
Search out the next things to impossible
And put me on them. When they are effected
I may with better modesty receive
Forgiveness from you.

VIOLA

I will set no penance
To gain the great forgiveness you desire
But to come hither, and take me and it.
Or else I'll come and beg, so you will grant
That you will be content to be forgiven!

RICARDO (*rises*)

Nay, I will come, since you will have it so;
And, since you please to pardon me, I hope
Free from infection.

(*Moves slowly up to down right of her; with uttermost, passionate earnestness*) Here I am by you, —
A careless man, a breaker of my faith,
A loathsome drunkard, and in that wild fury
A hunter after whores! I do beseech you
To pardon all these faults, and take me up
An honest, sober, and a faithful man!
[*His voice falls and sobs.*

VIOLA

For God's sake, urge your faults no more, but mend!
All the forgiveness I can make you, is
To love you; which I will do, and desire
Nothing but love again — which if I have not,
Yet I will love you still.
[*She comes down to him, lovingly, — embraces him; — and he with heart-broken devotion clasps her and sobs against her bosom. Then he draws back, his left arm still around her.*

RICARDO

O Viola, that no succeeding age
Might lose the memory of what thou wert!
(*To the audience*)
O women, that some one of you will take
An everlasting pen into your hands
And grave in paper, which the writ shall make
More lasting than the marble monuments,
Your matchless virtues to posterities!
But such an overswayëd sex is yours
That all the virtuous actions you can do
Are but as men will call them: and I swear
'Tis my belief that women want but ways
To praise their deeds, but men want deeds to praise.

THE SCHEMING LIEUTENANT

A Farce
condensed from
St. Patrick's Day
By RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

Presented in the John Herron Art Institute, Indianapolis,
Before the Little Theater Society of Indiana,
October 30, 1915

INTRODUCTION

THE need for introduction markedly diminishes as we descend the stream of time to the still living drama of Sheridan. No season passes us without some performances, somewhere, of his *Rivals*, his *School for Scandal*, or, latterly, his *Critic*. Amateur clubs are especially partial to his plays, though they call for elaborate and expensive wigs and costumes, and frequent changes of scene; and before an audience not too eager for novelty and experiment, their comedy is just as effective now as ever.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, born in Dublin in 1751, educated at Harrow and by his orator-father, married young after romantic duels and an elopement, and famed both as a wit upon the stage and as an orator in Parliament, was the best eighteenth-century dramatist writing in English. His first comedy, *The Rivals*, was produced on January 17, 1775. It failed, from too great length and a grave miscasting of the part of Lucius O'Trigger, and was withdrawn, rewritten, brought out on January 27. It then made hit — for which the new actor

On November 21, 1775, Sheridan's opera, *The Duenna*, began a run of seventy-five performances. The normal run was nine! In June, 1776, the young conqueror succeeded Garrick as manager and half owner of the Drury Lane Theater. On May 8, 1777, came the première of *The School for Scandal;* on October 30, 1779, came that of *The Critic;* — and then Sheridan abandoned the theater for politics, and his satiric wit, his barbed glance into character, and his genius for comic stage-contrivance ceased to immortalize themselves in vivid and yet-living plays.

St. Patrick's Day, written for an occasion, and without any academic, "literary" value, has been almost forgotten. In resurrecting it here for Little Theater use, the adapter realizes that it is mere farce, mere pretty foolery such as amateurs too often divert their friends withal, — but he thinks that at the end of a bill, and so at the end of this book, unthinking laughter and sport may have their proper place. Fleetly, spectacularly, uproariously played, *The Scheming Lieutenant* makes a very good finish to a one-act bill.

CHARACTERS

LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR, a young Irish officer with the hint of a brogue, in proper uniform, versatilely comic.

DOCTOR ROSY, a little, wizened, red-cheeked character in black, with a plaintive, singsong voice but great powers of humorous dissembling.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS, a portly, beef-eating, choleric, gullible farce-type.

JOHN, HIS SERVANT, a low comedian.

MRS. BRIDGET CREDULOUS, his wife, a testy, talkative, tyrannical dowager.

LAURETTA, their daughter, a pretty ingénue, who can sing.

CORPORAL FLINT and SOLDIERS, — as many pair as possible, — "Red-coats" of 1775, with fife and drum playing *The British Grenadier*, etc.

THE CAST OF THE PLAY AT ITS ORIGINAL PERFORMANCE

LIEUTENANT O'CONNOR	William O. Conway
DOCTOR ROSY	Harrison P. Brown
JUSTICE CREDULOUS	Charles McNaull
MRS. BRIDGET CREDULOUS	Mrs. Edgar Cawley
LAURETTA	Miss Elinor M. Cox
JOHN	Maxwell Parry
CORPORAL FLINT	Howard B. Hill
SOLDIERS	St. Clair Jones H. L. Earnest Arthur Sayler Oliver Fuller

emerges from the house door, cautiously helps himself down the steps with his stick, and starts for the gate. O'Connor surprises him with a loud whisper:

O'CONNOR

Ah, my little Doctor Rosy, my Galen abridged, — what's the news?

ROSY

All things are as they were, my Alexander; the justice is as violent as ever: I felt his pulse on the matter again, and, thinking his rage began to intermit, I wanted to throw in the bark of good advice; but it would not do. He says you and your cutthroats have a plot upon his life, and swears he would rather see his daughter in a scarlet fever than in the arms of a soldier.

O'CONNOR

Upon my word, the army is very much obliged to him! Well, then, I must marry the girl first, and ask his consent afterwards.

ROSY

So, then, the case of her *fortune* is *desperate*, hey?

O'CONNOR

Oh, hang the fortune, — let that take its chance; there is a beauty in Lauretta's simplicity, — so pure a bloom upon her charms!

ROSY

So there is, so there is. I never see her but she puts me in mind of my poor dear wife. Poor Dolly! Death has no consideration — one must die as well as another.

O'CONNOR (*aside*)

Oh, if he begins to moralize —

[*Takes out his snuffbox.*

ROSY

Fair and ugly, crooked or straight, rich or poor, — flesh is grass — flowers fade!

O'CONNOR (*leaning solicitously over the gate and extending his snuffbox*)

Here, Doctor, take a pinch of snuff, and keep up your spirits.

ROSY (*helping himself*)

True, true, my friend; grief can't mend the matter, — all's for the best; she is gone, never to return, and has left no pledge of our love behind: no little babe, to hang like a label round papa's neck. Well, well, we are all mortal: — sooner or later — flesh is grass — flowers fade.

O'CONNOR (*aside*)

Oh, the devil! — again!

ROSY

Life's a shadow — the world a stage — we strut an hour.

O'CONNOR

Here, doctor.

[*Offers snuff again, opening the gate in invitation.*

ROSY (*helping himself again*)

True, true, my friend. Well, high grief can't cure it. All's for the best, hey, my little Alexander?

[*As he goes through the gate.*

O'CONNOR

Right, right; an apothecary should never be out of *spirits*. (*Shuts gate*) But come, faith, 'tis time "honest Humphrey" should wait on the Justice; that must be our first scheme.

ROSY

True, true; you should be ready. The clothes are at my house, and I have given you such a character that he is impatient to have you: he swears you shall be his bodyguard.

[*As they go off together, left.*

Enter Lauretta and Mrs. Bridget Credulous, pettishly, from the house. Lauretta goes to the gate, but turns there.

LAURETTA

I repeat it again, mamma, — officers are the prettiest men in the world, and Lieutenant O'Connor is the prettiest officer I ever saw.

MRS. BRIDGET

For shame, Laura! how can you talk so? Or if you *must* have a military man, there's Lieutenant Plow, or Captain Haycock, or Major Dray, the brewer, are all your admirers; and though they are peaceable, good kind of men, they have as large cockades, and become scarlet as well as the fighting folks.

LAURETTA

Psha! You know, mamma, I *hate* militia officers; — a set of dunghill cocks, with spurs on, — heroes scratched off a church door, — clowns in military masquerade, wearing the dress without supporting the character! No, give *me* the bold upright youth who makes love to-day, and his head shot off to-morrow! Dear! To think how the sweet fellows sleep on the ground, and fight in silk stockings and lace ruffles!

MRS. BRIDGET

Oh, barbarous! to want a husband that may wed you to-day, and be sent the Lord knows where before

night; then in a twelvemonth perhaps to have him come like a Colossus, with one leg at New York and the other at Chelsea Hospital.

LAURETTA

Then I'll be his crutch, mamma.

MRS. BRIDGET

No, give me a husband that knows where his limbs *are*, though he *wants* the *use* of them! And if he should take you with him, to sleep in a baggage-cart, and stroll about the camp like a gipsy, with a knapsack and two children at your back? Then, by way of entertainment in the evening, to make a party with the sergeant's wife to play at all-fours on a drumhead? — 'Tis a precious life, to be sure!

[*During this she has approached Lauretta threateningly. Lauretta tries to appease her.*

LAURETTA

Nay, mamma, you shouldn't be against my lieutenant, for I heard him say you were the best-natured and best-looking woman in the world.

MRS. BRIDGET (*instantly mollified*)

Why, child, I never said but that Lieutenant O'Connor was a very well-bred and discerning young man; 'tis your *papa* is so violent against him.

LAURETTA

Why, Cousin Sophy married an officer!

MRS. BRIDGET

Ay, Laura, an officer of the *militia!*

LAURETTA

No, indeed, ma'am, a marching regiment.

MRS. BRIDGET

No, child, I tell you he was a major of militia.

LAURETTA

Indeed, mamma, it wasn't.

[*Enter Justice Credulous, from the house, speaking as he pompously descends the steps.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Bridget, my love, I have had a message.

LAURETTA

It was Cousin Sophy told me so.

[*She flaunts across, toward her father.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

I have had a message, love —

MRS. BRIDGET (*shouting after Lauretta*)

No, child, she would say no such thing.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*arriving between the two*)

A message, I say.

LAURETTA (*whirling around, down right*)

How *could* he be in the militia, when he was ordered abroad?

MRS. BRIDGET

Ay, girl, hold your tongue! (*To her husband*) Well, my dear?

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

I have had a message from Doctor Rosy.

MRS. BRIDGET (*at Lauretta again, spitting like a cat across the Justice*)

He ordered abroad! He went abroad for his health.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Why, Bridget!

MRS. BRIDGET

Well, deary? — Now hold your tongue, miss!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

A message from Doctor Rosy, and Doctor Rosy says —

LAURETTA

I'm sure, mamma, his regimentals —

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Damn his regimentals! Why don't you listen?

MRS. BRIDGET

Ay, girl, how durst you interrupt your papa?

LAURETTA (*with a little satirical curtsy*)

Well, papa.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Doctor Rosy says he'll bring —

LAURETTA

Were blue turned up with red, mamma.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Laury! — says he will bring the young man —

MRS. BRIDGET

Red! Yellow, if you please, miss.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Bridget! — the young man that is to be hired —

MRS. BRIDGET (*losing patience, crossing the Justice and bearing down on Lauretta*)

Besides, miss, it is very unbecoming in you to want to have the last word with your mamma; you should know —

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Why, zounds! will you hear me or no?

MRS. BRIDGET (*half turning, center*)

I am listening, my love, I am listening! But what signifies my silence, what good is *my* not speaking a word, if this girl *will* interrupt, and let nobody speak but herself? Ay, I don't wonder, my life, at your impatience: your poor dear lips quiver to speak;

but I suppose she'll run on and not let you put in a word. You may very well be angry; there is nothing, sure, so provoking as a chattering, talking, —

LAURETTA

Nay, I'm sure, mamma, it is *you* will not let papa speak now.

MRS. BRIDGET

Why, you little provoking minx —

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Get out of the garden directly, both of you, — get out!

MRS. BRIDGET

Ay, go, girl.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Go, Bridget, you are worse than she, you old hag! I wish you were both up to the neck in the canal, to argue there till I took you out.

[*Enter John, the Servant, from the house, but does not descend steps.*

JOHN (*announcing*)

Doctor Rosy, sir.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Show him out.

[*Exit John.*

LAURETTA (*backing toward the steps*)

Then you own, mamma, it *was* a marching regiment?

MRS. BRIDGET

You're an obstinate fool, I tell you; for if that had been the case —

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

You won't go?

MRS. BRIDGET

We *are* going, Mr. Surly. If that had been the case, I say, how could, —

LAURETTA (*half up the steps*)

Nay, mamma, one proof —

MRS. BRIDGET

How could Major —

LAURETTA (*disappearing in the doorway*)

And a full proof —

[*Mrs. Bridget pushes in after her and slams the door.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

There they go, ding-dong, in for the day! Good lack! a fluent tongue is the only thing a mother don't like her daughter to resemble her in. (*Wipes his forehead, and takes snuff. Enter Doctor Rosy from the house and, with his stick, down the steps*) Well, Doctor, where's the lad — where's Trusty?

ROSY

At hand; he'll be here in a minute, I'll answer for't. He's such a one as you 'a'n't met with — brave as a lion, gentle as a saline draught.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Ah! He comes in the *place* of a *rogue*, a dog that was corrupted by the *Lieutenant*. But this is a *sturdy* fellow, is he, Doctor?

ROSY

As Hercules; and the best back-sword in the country. Egad, *he'll* make the red-coats keep their distance!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Oh, the villains! This is St. Patrick's Day, and the rascals have been parading my house all the morning. I know they have a design upon me; but I have taken all precautions; I have magazines of arms, and if *this* fellow does but prove faithful, I shall be more at ease.

ROSY

Doubtless, he'll be a comfort to you.

JOHN (*entering*)

Here is a man inquires for Doctor Rosy.

ROSY

Show him out.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Hold! A little caution. (*To John*) How does he look?

JOHN

A country-looking fellow, your worship.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Oh, well, well, for Doctor Rosy! (*To Rosy, apologizing*) These rascals try all ways to get in here.

JOHN

Yes, please your worship; there was one here this morning wanted to speak to you; he said his name was Corporal Breakbones.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Corporal Breakbones!

JOHN

And Drummer Crackskull came again.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Ay, did you ever hear of such a damned confounded crew? (*To John*) Well, show the lad out here!

[*Exit John.*

ROSY

Ay, he'll be your porter; he'll give the rogues an answer.

[*Enter from the house Lieutenant O'Connor, farcically disguised as a yeoman, with a big black patch over one eye. He carries a big club.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

So, a tall — Efacks! what! has lost an eye?

ROSY

Only a bruise he got, in taking seven or eight highwaymen!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

He has a damned wicked leer, somehow, with the other.

ROSY

Oh, no, he's bashful — a sheepish look —

[*Thus warned, O'Connor meekly descends the steps.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Well, my lad, what's your name?

O'CONNOR (*with exaggerated rusticity*)

Humphrey Hum.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Hum — I don't like Hum!

O'CONNOR (*ingenuously*)

But I be mostly called honest Humphrey —

ROSY

There, I told you so, of *noted* honesty.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Well, honest Humphrey, the doctor has told you my terms, and you are willing to serve, hey?

O'CONNOR

And please your worship, I shall be well content.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Well, then, hark ye, honest Humphrey: — you are sure now, you will never be a rogue — never take a bribe, hey, honest Humphrey?

O'CONNOR

A bribe! What's that?

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*astonished, to Rosy*)

A very ignorant fellow indeed!

ROSY

His worship hopes you will not part with your honesty for money.

O'CONNOR

Noa, noa.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Well said, Humphrey! My chief business with you is to watch the motions of a rake-helly fellow here, one Lieutenant O'Connor.

ROSY

Ay, you don't value the soldiers, do you, Humphrey?

O'CONNOR

Not I; they are but zwaggerers, and you'll see they'll be as much afraid of *me*, as they would of their captain.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

And i' faith, Humphrey, you have a pretty cudgel there!

O'CONNOR

Ay, the zwitch is better than nothing, but I should be glad of a stouter: ha' you got such a thing in the house as an old coach-pole, or a spare bed-post?

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Oons, what a dragon it is! —

[*John enters and descends the steps with a cup of chocolate, which O'Connor takes from him. He goes out again. O'Connor with a deep bow passes it to the Justice, who drinks; and while his back is turned O'Connor and Rosy shake hands.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*finishing drinking, hands the cup back to O'Connor and crosses toward the house*)
Come with me. — I'll just show him to Bridget, Doctor, and we'll agree. — Come along, honest Humphrey. (*The Justice ascends the steps, turns at the door and spies Soldiers off left*) I thought I saw some of the cutthroats!

ROSY
Ha! Odds life, here comes some of them! (*He takes the cup from O'Connor*) We'll stand by and let them pass.
[*With a wink at O'Connor he steps behind the tree. O'Connor swaggers over to the gate.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS
Oh, the bloody-looking dogs!
[*He gets inside the door but does not close it, and can be seen listening to what follows.*
Reënter, left, Corporal Flint and his soldiers.

FLINT (*pausing at the gate*)
Halloa, friend! do you serve Justice Credulous?

O'CONNOR
I do.

FLINT
Are you rich?

O'CONNOR
Noa.

FLINT
Nor ever will be, with that old stingy booby. Look here — take it.
[*Gives him a purse.*

O'CONNOR
What must I do for this?

FLINT

Mark me. Our Lieutenant is in love with the old rogue's daughter. Help us to break his worship's bones, and carry off the girl, — and you are a made man.

O'CONNOR

I'll see you hanged first, you pack of skurry villains!

[*Throws away purse, toward center-stage.*

FLINT (*flinging open the gate*)

What, sirrah, do you mutiny? Lay hold of him!

[*Stands aside for two soldiers to enter and lay hands on O'Connor, who hurls them off, backing away.*

O'CONNOR

Nay, then, I'll try your armor for you.

[*He beats them. They reel back, one falling and losing his hat. The others run. O'Connor picks up the hat and strikes Flint with it, then throws it after them.*

ALL

Oh! Oh! Quarter! Quarter!

[*Exeunt Corporal Flint and Soldiers, left.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*coming out delighted*)

Trim them, trounce them, break their bones, honest Humphrey! What a spirit he has!

ROSY

Aquafortis.

O'CONNOR (*shutting the gate, sedately*)

Betray your master!

ROSY

What a miracle of fidelity!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Ay, and it shall not go unrewarded, — I'll give him sixpence (*coming down steps, feeling in his pockets*) on the spot. Here, honest Humphrey, there's for

yourself: as for this bribe (*taking up the purse*), such trash is best in the hands of justice. Now then, Doctor, I think I may trust him to guard the women: while he is with them I may go out with safety.

ROSY

Doubtless you may. — I'll answer for the Lieutenant's behavior whilst honest Humphrey is with your daughter.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Ay, ay, she shall go nowhere without him. (*Enter Lauretta, along the bank, extreme rear right, her hat on, strolling, and glancing up and down the road. The Justice bustles across to the gate, scolding*) Why, you little truant, how durst you wander so far from the house without my leave? Do you want to invite that scoundrel lieutenant to scale the walls and carry you off?

LAURETTA (*tripping down the bank steps to the gate, which her father holds open for her*)

Lud, papa, you are so apprehensive for nothing.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Why, hussy, —

LAURETTA (*entering*)

Well, then, — I can't *bear* to be shut up all day so like a nun! I am sure it is enough to make one *wish* to be run away with — and I wish I *was* run away with — I do, — and I wish the Lieutenant knew it.

[*O'Connor grins at Doctor Rosy.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*shutting the gate, conclusively*)

You do, do you, hussy? Well, I think I'll take pretty good care of you! Here, Humphrey, I leave

this lady in your care. Now you may walk about the garden, Miss Pert; but Humphrey shall go with you wherever you go. So mind, honest Humphrey! I am obliged to go abroad for a little while; let no one but yourself come near her! Don't be shamefaced, you booby, but keep close to her. And now, Miss, let your lieutenant or any of his crew come near you if they can.

[*Exit through the gate and away, left. O'Connor stands center, staring after him. Doctor Rosy pats him on the back and quietly goes off up the steps into the house.*

LAURETTA (*looking contemptuously at O'Connor*)

How this booby stares after him!

[*Crosses to the tree, sits under it, doffs her hat, and sings a sentimental ditty of the period. O'Connor, once the Justice is out of sight, pushes up his black patch and slips over to the tree, half behind it and her.*

O'CONNOR

Lauretta!

LAURETTA

Not so free, fellow!

[*Finishes her song.*

O'CONNOR

Lauretta! Look on me.

LAURETTA

Not so free, fellow!

O'CONNOR

No recollection!

LAURETTA (*with contempt*)

"Honest Humphrey" — be quiet!

O'CONNOR (*falling on his knees beside her*)

Have you forgot your faithful soldier?

LAURETTA

Ah, preserve me!

O'CONNOR

'Tis, my soul! your truest slave, passing on your father in this disguise!

LAURETTA

Well now, I declare this is charming: you are so disguised, my dear Lieutenant, and you look so delightfully ugly! I am sure no one will find you out, Ha! Ha! Ha! — You know, I am under your protection; papa charged you to keep close to me.

[*Very coquettishly, making room on the seat for him.*

O'CONNOR (*sitting beside her and slipping an arm about her waist*)

True, my angel, and thus let me fulfill —

LAURETTA

O pray now, dear Humphrey —

O'CONNOR

Nay, 'tis but what old Mittimus commanded!

[*Offers to kiss her.*

Reënter Justice Credulous, from left, along the bank.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*calling*)

Laury, my (*at the top of the bank steps he spies their embrace*) — hey! what the devil's here?

[*He runs down to the gate as fast as he can.*

LAURETTA

Well now, one kiss, and be quiet.

[*They kiss just as her father bursts in at the gate, roaring.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Your very humble servant, honest Humphrey! Don't let me — pray don't let me interrupt you!

LAURETTA (*who has sprung, like a rabbit, to lower right, turning nervously*)

Lud, papa! Now that's so good-natured! Indeed there's no harm. You did not mean any rudeness, did you, Humphrey?

O'CONNOR (*who has hidden his face and replaced the black patch*)

No, indeed, Miss; his worship knows it is not in me.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

I know that you are a lying, canting, hypocritical scoundrel; and if you don't take yourself out of my sight —

LAURETTA

(*has recovered herself and steps between them, center*) Indeed, papa, now I'll tell you how it was. I was sometime taken with a sudden giddiness, and Humphrey, seeing me beginning to totter, ran to my assistance, quite frightened, poor fellow, and took me in his arms.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Oh! was that all! Nothing but a little *giddiness*, hey!

O'CONNOR (*stepping up boldly, to Lauretta's right*)

That's all indeed, your worship; for seeing Miss change color, I ran up instantly.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*with enormous sarcasm*)

Oh, 'twas very kind in you!

O'CONNOR

And luckily recovered her.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*exploding*)

And who made *you* a doctor, you impudent rascal, hey? Get out of my sight, I say, this instant, or by all the statutes —

LAURETTA

Oh, now, papa, you frighten me and I am giddy again! Oh help!

[*Reeling back.*

O'CONNOR

Oh, dear lady, she'll fall!

[*Takes her into his arms.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Zounds! What, before my face? Why then, thou miracle of impudence — (*lays hold of him and, accidentally pushing up the patch, discovers him*). Mercy on me (*springing back*), who have we here? Murder! Robbery! Fire! Rape! Gunpowder! Soldiers! John! Susan! Bridget!

O'CONNOR (*center, his right arm around Lauretta*)

Good sir, don't be alarmed; I mean you no harm.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*continuing to stamp all over the left of stage, and bellow like a bull toward the house*)

Thieves! Robbers! Soldiers!

O'CONNOR (*loudly*)

You know my love for your daughter —

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*overwhelming him*)

Fire! Cutthroats!

O'CONNOR (*shouting*)

And that alone —

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*dancing with rage and screeching*)

Treason! Gunpowder! (*Enter John from the house with a blunderbuss, of which he is greatly scared. The Justice rushes across and grabs it from him, aims it at O'Connor with one hand and seizes Lauretta's right hand with the other*) Now, scoundrel! Let her go this instant.

LAURETTA

O papa, you'll kill me!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*his voice trembling with fury*)

Honest Humphrey, be advised. Ay, Miss, this way, if you please!

O'CONNOR (*letting Lauretta go*)

Nay, sir, but hear me —

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*backing toward the house, dragging Lauretta and pointing blunderbuss*)

I'll shoot.

O'CONNOR

And you'll be convinced —

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*backing up the steps*)

I'll shoot.

O'CONNOR

How injurious —

[*John retires, opening the door behind the Justice.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

I'll shoot! (*He yanks Lauretta up and thrusts her in behind him, then lowers the blunderbuss and bows to O'Connor*) And so, your very humble servant, honest Humphrey Hum!

[*O'Connor starts forward; the Justice, laughing, backs into the house and shuts the door; and O'Connor sits disconsolately on the steps.*

Enter Doctor Rosy behind the fence, from up right, walking slowly, with his cane, down toward the gate.

ROSY (*soliloquizing*)

Well, all is vanity, — we are as it were, king and beggar; then what avails —

O'CONNOR (*seeing him, crying out, but not moving*)
Oh, Doctor! ruined and undone!

ROSY
The pride of beauty —

O'CONNOR (*rising*)
I am discovered, and —

ROSY
The gaudy palaces —

O'CONNOR (*going toward him*)
The Justice is —

ROSY
The pompous wig —

O'CONNOR
Is more enraged than ever!

ROSY (*reaching the gate*)
The gilded cane —

O'CONNOR (*confronting him, opening the gate for him*)
Why, Doctor!

ROSY
Hey!

O'CONNOR
Confound your morals! I tell you I am discovered, discomfited, disappointed!

ROSY (*pausing in the gate*)
Indeed! Good lack, good lack, to think of the instability of human affairs! Nothing certain in this world, — most deceived when most confident, — fools of fortune all.

O'CONNOR
My dear Doctor, I want at present a little *practical* wisdom. I am resolved this instant to try the

scheme we were going to put into execution last week. I have the letter ready, and only want *your assistance* to recover my ground.

ROSY

With all my heart. (*Waking up and smiling*) I'll warrant you I'll bear a part in it! But how the deuce were you discovered?

[*Coming in.*

O'CONNOR (*turning him round determinedly*)

I'll tell you as we go; there's not a minute to be lost.

ROSY

Heaven send we succeed better! — but there's no knowing.

[*O'Connor pushes him out through the gate again.*

O'CONNOR

Very true.

ROSY

We are but blind guessers.

O'CONNOR (*closing the gate*)

Nothing more.

ROSY

Thick-sighted mortals.

O'CONNOR (*taking his arm*)

Remarkably.

ROSY

Wandering in error.

O'CONNOR (*urging him toward left*)

Even so.

ROSY

Futurity is dark.

O'CONNOR (*pushing him out of sight*)

As a cellar.

ROSY (*his voice singsonging into the distance*)

Men are moles.

[*Pause.*

Enter Justice Credulous and Mrs. Bridget Credulous, from the house.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Odds life, Bridget, you are enough to make one mad. I tell you he would have deceived a Chief Justice: the dog seemed as ignorant as my clerk, and talked of honesty as if he had been a churchwarden.

MRS. BRIDGET

Pho! Nonsense, honesty! What had you to do, pray, with honesty? A fine business you have made of it with your Humphrey Hum: and Miss, too, *she* must have been privy to it! Lauretta! — ay, *you would* have her called so; but for my part I never knew any good come of giving girls these heathen Christian names! If you had called her Deborah, or Tabitha, or Ruth, or Rebecca, or Joan, nothing of this had ever happened; but I always knew Lauretta was a runaway name.

[*Flounces down in the seat under the tree.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Psha, you're a fool!

MRS. BRIDGET

No, Mr. Credulous, it is you who are a fool, and no one but such a simpleton would be so imposed on.

[*Enter John from the house and down the steps, with a letter.*

JOHN

A letter for your worship.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*staying left*)
Who brought it?

JOHN
A soldier.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*violently*)
Take it away and burn it.

MRS. BRIDGET (*starting up*)
Stay! Now you're in such a hurry! It is some canting scrawl from the lieutenant, I suppose. (*Takes the letter. — Exit John, right*) Let me see: — Ay, 'tis signed O'Connor.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS
Well, come, read it out.

MRS. BRIDGET (*reads*)
Revenge is sweet.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS
It begins *so*, does it? I'm glad of that; I'll let the dog know *I'm* of his opinion.

MRS. BRIDGET (*reads*)
And though disappointed of my designs upon your daughter, I have still the satisfaction of knowing I am revenged on her unnatural father; for this morning, in your (*her reading quickens*) chocolate I had the pleasure to administer to you a dose of *poison!* — Mercy on us!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*turning pale*)
No tricks, Bridget; come, you know it is not so; you know it is a lie.

MRS. BRIDGET (*sharply, handing it to him*)
Read it yourself.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*reads*)

Pleasure to administer — a dose — of poison! (*Lets the letter drop*) — Oh, horrible! (*Staggers*) — Cutthroat villain! — (*Appealingly, in great fear*) Bridget!

[*But Mrs. Bridget, with gleaming eye, picks up the letter and reads it again, with relish.*

MRS. BRIDGET

Lovee, stay, here's a postscript. (*Reads*) N.B. 'Tis not in the power of medicine to save you.

[*Looks at him triumphantly.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Odds my life, Bridget! Why don't you call for help? I've lost my voice. — My brain is giddy. — I shall burst, and no assistance! John! — Laury! — John!

[*He totters, calling faintly, to the seat, and lets himself down on it as though he might break.*

MRS. BRIDGET (*crossing, sweetly*)

You see, lovee, what you have brought on yourself.

[*Reënter John.*

JOHN

Your worship!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*weakly, tremulously*)

Stay, John; did you perceive anything in my chocolate cup this morning?

JOHN

Nothing, your worship, unless it was a little grounds.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*with rising fear*)

What color were they?

JOHN

Blackish, your worship.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*wailing*)

Ay, arsenic, black arsenic! Why don't you run for Doctor Rosy, you rascal?

JOHN

Now, sir?

MRS. BRIDGET (*returning from left*)

Oh, lovee, you may be sure it is in vain; let him run for the lawyer to witness your will, my life.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Zounds! Go for the doctor, you scoundrel. You are all confederate murderers.

JOHN

Oh, here he is, your worship.

[*Doctor Rosy enters, left, behind fence.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

(*Summoning his strength and rising heavily*)

Now, Bridget, hold your tongue, and let me see if my horrid situation be apparent.

[*She stands up-stage, the Justice down right-center, as Doctor Rosy opens the gate and enters.*

ROSY

I have but just called to inform — hey! bless me, what's the matter with your worship?

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

There, he sees it already! Poison in my face, in capitals! Yes, yes, I'm a sure job for the undertakers indeed!

MRS. BRIDGET (*feigning hysterics*)

Oh! Oh! alas, Doctor!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Peace, Bridget! (*Stands with firm-planted feet; roundly*) Why, Doctor, my dear old friend, do you really see any change in me?

ROSY

Change?! Never was man so altered! How came these black spots on your nose?

[*Pointing with his cane and peering intently as he hobbles toward the Justice.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*starting back*)

Spots on my nose!

ROSY

And that wild stare in your right eye!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*clapping his hand to it*)

In my right eye?

ROSY (*almost upon him, crying out*)

Ay, and alack, alack, how you are swelled!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Swelled!

[*He collapses into the arms of John. John quivers with his weight and fear, shakes him down on the steps, and flees into the house.*

ROSY (*center, now, — turning left*)

Ay, don't *you* think he is, madam?

MRS. BRIDGET (*coming down left-center, aggravatingly*)

Oh! 'tis in vain to conceal it! Indeed, lovee, you are as big again as you were this morning.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*rocking and groaning*)

Yes, I feel it now — I'm poisoned!

(*Extending frantic hands*)

Doctor, help me, for the love of justice! Give me life to see my murderer hanged.

ROSY (*at "murderer" feigning a tremendous start*)

What?

JUSTICE CREDULOUS
I'm poisoned, I say!

ROSY (*leaning forward, hand behind ear*)
Speak out!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*astounded*)
What! Can't you hear me?

ROSY (*ominously*)
Your voice is so low and hollow, as it were, — I can't hear a word you say.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*flings his arms up and sprawls on the steps*)
I'm gone then! Hic jacet, many years one of His Majesty's justices!

MRS. BRIDGET (*gleefully, thrusting the letter into Rosy's hands, then crossing behind him to gloat over her husband*)
Read, Doctor! — Ah, lovee, the will! Consider, my life, how soon you will be dead.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*in a stifled voice*)
No, Bridget, I shall die by inches.

ROSY (*after reading*)
I never heard of such monstrous iniquity. Oh, you are gone indeed, my friend! The mortgage of your little bit of clay is out, and the sexton has nothing to do but to close. We must all go, sooner or later: — high and low — Death's a debt; his mandamus binds all alike — no bail, no demurrer.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*in agony*)
Silence, Doctor Croaker! Will you cure me or will you not?

ROSY

Alas! my dear friend, it is not in my power; but (*shaking his stick*) I'll certainly see justice done on your murderer!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*querulous*)

I thank you, my dear friend, but I had rather see it myself.

ROSY (*darting the stick at him, keenly*)

Ay, but if you recover, the villain will escape.

MRS. BRIDGET (*bridling*)

Will he? then indeed it would be a pity you should recover! I am so enraged against the villain, I can't bear the thought of his escaping the halter.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*sitting up, in a healthier tone*)

That's very kind in you, my dear; but if it's the same thing to you, my dear, I had as soon recover, notwithstanding. (*Then to Doctor Rosy, pleading*) What, Doctor, no assistance!

ROSY

Efacks, I can do nothing! But there's the German quack, whom you wanted to send from town; I met *him* at the next door (*waving the stick left*), and I know *he* has antidotes for *all* poisons.

[*With mock scorn for the unprofessional!*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Fetch him, my dear friend, fetch him! I'll get him a diploma if he cures me.

ROSY

Well, there's no time to be lost; you continue to swell immensely.

[*Exit, out the gate and off left.*

The Justice sits feeling his face and body.

MRS. BRIDGET

What, my dear, will you submit to be cured by a quack nostrum-monger? For my part, as much as I love you, I had rather follow you to your grave than see you owe your life to any but a regular-bred physician.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*with vigor*)

I'm sensible of your affection, dearest, and be assured nothing consoles me in my melancholy situation so much as the thoughts of leaving you behind.

[*Reënter Doctor Rosy with Lieutenant O'Connor, extravagantly disguised as a quack, in whiskers, spectacles, cloak, etc.*

ROSY

Great luck; met him passing by the door.

[*Brings him in the gate. He pauses, left-center, and scans the Justice up and down. All the other three wait breathlessly for his verdict.*

O'CONNOR (*sonorously*)

Metto dowsei pulsum.

[*All look amazed.*

ROSY

He desires me to feel your pulse.

[*He crosses and feels the Justice's left wrist, while Mrs. Bridget nears O'Connor with awe.*

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*in hushed tones*)

Can't he speak English?

ROSY (*equally hushed*)

Not a word.

[*He returns softly to O'Connor and darkly whispers in his ear.*

O'CONNOR (*like an oracle*)

Palio vivem mortem soonem.

ROSY (*to the Justice compassionately*)
He says you have not six hours to live.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*his symptoms returning*)
Oh, mercy! Does he know my distemper?

ROSY
I believe not.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS
Tell him 'tis black arsenic they have given me.

ROSY (*mysteriously*)
Geneable illi arsnecca.

O'CONNOR (*conclusively*)
Pisonatus.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*quavering*)
What does he say?

ROSY
He says you are poisoned.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*impatiently*)
We know that; but what will be the effect?

ROSY (*to O'Connor*)
Quid effectum?

O'CONNOR
Diable tutellum.

ROSY
He says you'll die presently.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*falling forward on his knees, waving his clasped hands at O'Connor*)
Oh, horrible! What, no antidote?

O'CONNOR (*benignantly*)
Curum benakere bono fullum.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*wildly, half rising*)
What, does he say I must row in a boat to Fulham?

ROSY

He says he'll undertake to cure you for three thousand pounds.

[*The Justice totters to his feet in joy, but his wife bears down on him so fiercely he falls back on the steps.*

MRS. BRIDGET

Three thousand pounds! Three thousand halters! No, lovee, you shall never submit to such impositions; die at once, and be a customer to none of them.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*sullenly*)

I won't die, Bridget. — I don't like death.

[*Doctor Rosy and O'Connor quake together.*

MRS. BRIDGET

Psha! there is nothing in it: a moment and it is over.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Ay, but it leaves a numbness behind that lasts a plaguy long time.

MRS. BRIDGET

Oh, my dear, pray consider the will.

[*Enter Lauretta, right, and stands distressed in the door above her father.*

LAURETTA

Oh, my father, what is this I hear?

O'CONNOR (*as though thunderstruck*)

Quiddam seomriam deos tollam rosam!

[*All look at him again amazed.*

ROSY (*suavely*)

The doctor is astonished at the sight of your fair daughter.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

How so?

O'CONNOR (*ardently*)

Damsellum livivum suvum rislibani!

ROSY (*in great excitement*)

He says that he has lost his heart to her, and that if you will give him leave to pay his addresses to the young lady, and promise your consent to the union, if he should gain her affections, he will, on those conditions, cure you instantly, without fee or reward!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*rising heavily*)

The devil! did he say all that in so few words? What a fine language it is! Well, I agree, if he can prevail on the (*with a glance up at the indignant Lauretta*) girl. — (*Aside to his wife*) And that I am sure he never will!

ROSY (*pompously to O'Connor*)

Greal.

O'CONNOR

Writhum bothum!

[*He produces ink-horn, paper and quill.*

ROSY (*dipping the quill*)

He says you must give this under your hand (*the Justice dazedly takes paper and quill*), while he writes *you* a miraculous receipt.

[*He turns his back to O'Connor, who, producing another quill, puts paper against his back and writes. Seeing this, the Justice pounces on his wife and writes against* her *back: she very angry!*

LAURETTA (*still in the doorway*)

Do, mamma, tell me the meaning of this.

MRS. BRIDGET

Don't speak to me, girl! Unnatural parent!

JUSTICE (*waving the scribbled sheet eagerly*)

There, Doctor, there's what he requires.

ROSY (*straightening up, receiving O'Connor's paper, and exchanging it for the Justice's*)

And here's your receipt: read it yourself.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

Hey! what's here? Plain English!

ROSY

Read it out; a wondrous nostrum, I'll answer for it.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*reads*)

In reading this — you are cured — by your affectionate son-in-law, O'Connor. — Who in the name of Beelzebub, sirrah, who are you?

[*Rosy and Mrs. Bridget draw up-stage, watching with mixed emotions. Lauretta gives a little shriek.*

O'CONNOR (*sweeping off his disguise, down to that of Humphrey*)

Your affectionate son-in-law, O'Connor, and your very humble servant, Humphrey Hum.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

'Tis false, you dog! you are not my son-in-law; for I'll be poisoned again, and you shall be hanged: I'll die, sirrah, and leave Bridget my estate.

[*Glaring into O'Connor's face.*

MRS. BRIDGET (*only restrained by Doctor Rosy from bursting down-stage*)

Ay, pray do, my dear, leave me your estate; I'm sure he deserves to be hanged.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*diverted; passionately*)

He does, you say? Hark'ee, Bridget, — you showed such a tender concern for me when you thought me poisoned, that, for the future, I am resolved never

SCENE FROM *THE SCHEMING LIEUTENANT* AS PRODUCED AT THE JOHN HERRON ART INSTITUTE, INDIANAPOLIS, IN NOVEMBER, 1915

The characters from left to right are Doctor Rosy, Lieutenant O'Connor, Lauretta, Justice Credulous, and Mrs. Bridget, flanked by a pair of soldiers on each side

to take your advice again in anything! (*Mollified by this outburst, he turns back to O'Connor and sees that he has, to Lauretta's great delight, stripped off Humphrey Hum's smock and displayed his uniform*) So, do you hear, sir: you are an Irishman and a soldier, aren't you?

O'CONNOR (*bowing low, as he completes his transformation to his first, Lieutenant's, guise*)

I am, sir, and proud of both!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS

The two things on earth I most hate! So I tell you what: renounce your country and sell your commission, and I'll forgive you.

O'CONNOR (*stepping up to him, soldierly*)

Hark'ee, Mr. Justice, — if you were not the father of my beloved Lauretta (*raising his arms to her in invitation to descend*), I would pull your nose for asking the first and break your bones for desiring the second.

[*Lauretta darts into his arms.*

ROSY (*warmly, from the rear*)

Ay, ay, you're right!

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*disconcerted*)

Is he? Then I'm sure I must be wrong! (*Sees O'Connor kiss his daughter before his eyes*) You are the most impudent dog I ever saw in my life!

O'CONNOR (*happily*)

Oh, sir, say what you please! With such a gift as Lauretta, every word is a compliment!

[*The Justice shakes his head, beaten, turning front.*

MRS. BRIDGET (*coming down right, tartly*)

Well, my lovee, I think this will be a good subject for us to quarrel about the rest of our lives.

JUSTICE CREDULOUS (*with a wry smile to her*)

Why, truly, my dear, I think so, — though we are seldom at a loss for that!

ROSY (*coming down between the two pairs*)

This is all as it should be. (*To O'Connor*) My Alexander, I give you joy; and you, my little god-daughter! And now my sincere wish is that you may make just such a wife as my poor, dear Dolly!

[*A burst of martial music sounds, off rear. The Soldiers march in as at the beginning, — only on the bank-top, not the road, — and stand at salute along it. O'Connor returns the salute. Lauretta imitates it. Corporal Flint leading, the soldiers descend the steps, open the gate, march in, and fill the background. John appears in consternation at the door. Then one by one the five principals bow to the audience, the lovers once more embrace, the music resounds, and the curtain falls.*

FINIS

LITTLE THEATER CLASSICS

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VOLUME ONE